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could be desired, the goods were plainly not up to specifications; and it is now stated that in his forthcoming selling-tour through the hinterland he will make no attempt to vend that much-touted brand. The truth is that the war left those factories that turn out political works in a state of melancholy disintegration; and political bagmen everywhere are hard put to it to display products that attract anything but scorn and derision even from the most faithful of old customers.

GENERAL DAWES has suggested that the Republican party should make the open shop an issue in the next campaign, and Mr. Gompers has come forward, with appropriate eagerness, to defend the cause of the unions. As between the open shop and the closed shop, under existing economic conditions, we are heartily in favour of the latter; and yet we can not help but wish that Mr. Gompers and his friends in authority would come out for something new, take the offensive, and advance their position a little from the lines they have occupied for about a quarter of a century. For people who are interested in a radical change and improvement in the status of labour, the issue of collective bargaining has in it about as much meat and meaning as has the issue of normalcy for the country at large. The leaders of conventional trade unionism seem to have gotten into a kind of squirrel's cage; when some one alarms them, they move much more rapidly than before, but it is not noticeable that they are making any great progress.

DURING a two year period ending in 1922, the unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labour lost 800,000 members, or over twenty-eight per cent of their strength. On the other hand, the number of "company-unions" increased, in two and a half years, from 225 to 725. Among trade unionists, this change is interpreted as unfavourable to the employees' interests, and yet we are by no means sure that this is true. The shop-union is a compact organization of men of many crafts, who work together in a given plant; the trade union is a loose association of men of one craft who work in widely scattered plants. The trade union is well enough adapted to the business of collective bargaining, but the shop-union is far better fitted to undertake the actual conduct of production. The strongest of all organizations of labour is, of course, a federation of the shop-unions in a given industry; but the notion of developing such organizations, to the limit of all their possibilities, is apparently as remote from the thought of Mr. Gompers as it is from that of Mr. Gary.

REPRESENTATIVES of the labour-organizations in the anthracite field have submitted to the United States Coal Commission a statement of alleged overcharges in the industry. In mining they assert that there is an average overcharge of \$1.26 per ton; in transportation of one dollar per ton; in distribution of \$1.35 per ton; making a total overcharge of \$3.61 per ton, a figure which, on the basis of annual production, indicates that the American consumers of anthracite pay upwards of \$250 million more than they should for hard coal. In addition to this, a huge overcharge which the labour-representatives do not attempt to

CURRENT COMMENT.

AN ambitious go-getter in Mr. Harding's political family has suggested that the Administration install an official press agent at public expense, in order that the accomplishments of normalcy may be appropriately advertised. The idea is not exactly new, for Mr. Wilson's Administration mobilized a whole flock of publicity-experts, and there were times when the rattle of their typewriters grinding out laudations of the New Freedom, He Kept Us Out of War, Force to the Uttermost, etc., was almost too much for the human ear to bear. The American ear grew utterly weary of this continuous racket, and at the first opportunity the auditors expressed their emphatic desire to be rid of the whole claque. This lamentable experience seems not to discourage Mr. Harding's advisers. You can sell real estate or chewing gum through good press-work; why not politics? Indeed, now that real issues have faded from the political arena, and public interest in the mild stage-battles between the two brands of political place-holders is declining, perhaps the time has come to replace the pompous old war-horses of statesmanship with hustling twelve-cylinder advertising-artists who, by a choice mingling of language and decoration, can make political issues as compelling as a new toilet soap. There would be a certain advantage in getting rid of the evasive generalities and the specious piosities of current political propaganda, even if they were to be replaced by the banal patter of modern salesmanship. For President: Warren W. Pep. For Vice-President: Calvin Zip. Why not? At least the ticket would represent something tangible in American life.

THE SECRETARY OF LABOUR recently remarked in a public speech that Mr. Harding was naturally a poor salesman and hence he frequently failed to "put over" his political wares. We suspect, however, that Mr. Harding's trouble lies not in his technique of salesmanship, but in the fact that the goods at his command are not of the quality that can be sold to all of the people all of the time. Of late Mr. Harding has tried successively a domestic line and an imported line. The domestic line was labelled "ship-subsidy"; and, as far as results were concerned, Mr. Harding might just as well have been peddling ice in the Arctic circle. Next Mr. Harding took up a foreign article, the "world-court," but though the advertising was all that

estimate, results from the practice of the companies of holding coal-lands out of use and capitalizing them, not at the price paid, but on the basis of expected productivity. Well, we know of no better way to block this little game than by taxing these unused lands at one hundred per cent of their monopoly-value. The labour-brethren could have no end of fun, we think, if they would start a campaign for this purpose, demanding that the amount of the tax be determined by the amount at which the companies have capitalized these lands on their books.

In a letter to the New York *World*, two gentlemen who undertake to speak for "the New York Fascio" quote some interesting passages from a public address recently delivered by Mr. Elbert H. Gary in Rome. According to their transcript, Judge Gary said: "A master hand has indeed strongly grasped the helm of the Italian State. I feel like turning to my American friends and asking them whether we don't think that we too need a man like Mussolini." Probably a number of the policies of the new Italian Government would be calculated to excite the admiration of Judge Gary. That Government has effectively attacked the theory of the eight-hour day for labour; it has succeeded in nationalizing the labour-organizations, with the result that political or economic dissenters among the workers find themselves in a position of helpless isolation. In Italy to-day political government fulfills its natural coercive functions more frankly and directly than under old-fashioned parliamentary forms; and to Americans of a certain type the system may seem well worthy of emulation.

JUDGE GARY will probably find sympathy for his enthusiasm among those American army officers who have recently been urging former service men to organize themselves on the Fascist model, for political action. Curiously enough, his statement was printed at about the time that reports seeped into Washington that the redoubtable General Wood was preparing to return from the Philippines next year to re-enter the political arena. As far as we can see, there is no very strong sentiment among the electorate in favour of General Wood as a successor to President Harding; indeed there seems little likelihood that he could be elected. However, it may conceivably occur to those of the General's old comrades in arms who are seeking an American Mussolini, that the dictatorship of one of our imperial colonies affords an excellent training for the rôle.

THE first of the Communist trials in Michigan under the criminal syndicalist law of the State, seems to have ended in a complete defeat for the taxpayers of Berrien County. The jurors were evenly divided on the question whether or not Mr. W. Z. Foster, the defendant, was a criminal syndicalist; and so a month of costly legal procedure has gone for nothing and the whole process may have to be repeated. As thirty-one similar trials are still to come, we are filled with admiration of the fortitude of the taxpayers of Berrien County. We have heard no intimation of any complaint on the part of any of these taxpayers, so we assume that there is a unanimous sentiment among the patient folk of Berrien County in favour of holding responsible, to the full limit of the peculiar State law, any Communists who may chance to gather in their woodland spaces. Mr. Frank P. Walsh presented an affidavit tending to show that the supervisors of the county had been assured by Federal agents that the expenses of the trials would be forthcoming from some private outside source. If there is anything in this, it would seem that in certain portions of Michigan, judicial procedure is no longer a public function.

It is difficult to judge of any criminal trial from the newspaper-reports. The best reports of Mr. Foster's trial that we saw hereabouts, appeared in the New York *Times*; and yet on occasion these left us in some mental confusion. For instance, in the early days of the trial, the special correspondent of the *Times* spoke of Mr. Foster as follows: "He is a hard-looking man, of wiry, muscular build, and sharp, stern features, with a forbidding aspect." Ten days later, when Mr. Foster took the witness-stand, the correspondent described him as "A quiet, mild-mannered man. . . . He looked almost like a poet and a dreamer, with his soft blue eyes and his high forehead." As we pieced these two descriptions together, we failed to get a clear picture of Mr. Foster. Similarly, some of Mr. Foster's alleged activities, to which the correspondent seemed to attribute criminal significance, seemed utterly inconsequential to us. We could not discern any menace to American institutions in Mr. Foster's visit to Russia; in his advocacy of industrial unionism; in the approval of his educational programme by some of the Russian leaders; or even in the speech, at the Communist gathering in Bridgman, in which he showed a sympathy with the idea of the socialized State.

ON the other hand, a distinct menace to American institutions was implicit in the testimony elicited from two of the *provocateurs* of the Department of Justice who engineered the raids. It was apparent from the admissions of these men on cross-examination, that the Department has laboured heroically to magnify the Communist party and to stimulate it to unlawful endeavour. One of the departmental stool-pigeons, it appeared, was a leader of the left-wing Communist crowd, which attempted to keep the party a secret, underground organization. In the Communist party, ten groups are supposed to form a branch, and ten branches a section. One of the *provocateurs* testified that he was the responsible organizer and leader of a section, in which his sole associates were his wife, his son-in-law and another man. This testimony struck us as bearing out admirably Henry George's thesis that as privilege waxes in power, the personnel and activities of government are bound to deteriorate and become disreputable.

THE trial was conducted with the usual patriotic properties, and with the usual specious emotional appeals on the part of the prosecutors, such as the reading of fiery speeches made at a meeting of the Third International at Moscow two years ago, with which Mr. Foster obviously had nothing to do. At times the proceedings degenerated into broad farce, as when the prosecutor demanded of a Communist witness, "Are you in favour of the American Legion? Yes or no?" On the other hand, the judge's charge to the jury was thoroughly intelligent and reasonable, in strong contrast to the judicial expositions in similar trials during a more hysterical period. It is a sordid affair at best, however, this attempt on the part of a demoralized officialdom to inculcate certain opinions upon citizens, and then send the citizens to jail for accepting those opinions. Mr. Foster, it appears, is not a member of the Communist party. At the meeting in Michigan he was merely an invited guest. Possibly the other defendants may not fare so well. They may find themselves unfortunate in being citizens of this land of the free, rather than of some European country where political opinion is not so rigidly censored. In Europe, Communist organizations flourish openly in every country, with the exception of some of the new nations created by the old men of Versailles, which make no pretensions to political liberty; and inasmuch as communist delegates sit in all the principal parliaments of

Europe, it seems somewhat old-fashioned at best for the State of Michigan to attempt to send persons of the communist persuasion to jail for ten years, for holding a meeting.

THE French military authorities in the Rhineland have begun to deport German railway-workers who will not take orders from the new French masters. This latest manoeuvre, adapted from the method of the German military command in Belgium, seems unlikely to decrease the passive resistance of the German railwaymen in the occupied territory, or to improve the melancholy travesty of service on the railways. It is now three months since M. Poincaré's brave lads entered the Ruhr; and that district, normally the busiest in Europe, now furnishes the spectacle of virtually a whole population sitting on its hunkers and doing nothing for weeks on end. The invaders are clearly embarrassed, and the more rigorously they seek to press the population into their service, the more stolidly the inhabitants continue to do nothing. Meanwhile the French press is losing something of its optimism. It is pointed out that during the first month and a half of the occupation, France got from the Ruhr an average of two trains of coal a day, in place of the forty-seven trains delivered daily before the occupation. During the past month an increase in deliveries has been effected, but the supply is still only a small fraction of the expected amount, and conditions in the occupied area are chaotic. These circumstances lend credibility to the rumours that M. Loucheur, in his recent visit to London, was seeking an understanding with Downing Street concerning the muddled situation in the Ruhr. France has bitten off more than she can conveniently chew; and the French industrialists may well be in the mood to make it worth while for their old ally to come to the rescue.

THE cost of living in France has increased fifteen per cent since the occupation of the Ruhr, and still shows a steady upward trend. This was to be expected as a natural result of laying violent hands upon the economic centre of Europe. An adventure in political banditry such as M. Poincaré's expedition across the Rhine, automatically elevates the Government budget and the prices of necessities of life. Though the gentlemen associated in the Comité des Forges may conceivably derive eventual profit from M. Poincaré's bold move, the rest of the French population seem likely to be levied upon for a greater sum in their ordinary daily expenses during the present year than the French Government could possibly hope to gather in indemnities from the Germans. Thus the good people of France may find in their daily purchases an object-lesson in the costliness of imperialist policy. If they have the intelligence to take the lesson to heart, they may yet lead Europe in a revulsion to sanity and peace.

THE COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION has filled us with surprise and astonishment by drawing a comparison between some of our late allies and the Germans, to the disadvantage of the former. The Commissioner tells us that immigrants of the North-European stock are a better sort than those who come from the southern and eastern parts of the Continent. He does not make special mention of the Germans as superior, or of the Italians, Greeks, Serbians, and so forth, as inferior; but the invidious distinction is plain enough for all that. He can not praise the Nords without including our late enemies; nor can he disparage the Latins and the southern Slavs without including our friends; and accordingly, seeing what a mess he has made, we recommend that the American Legion have him hauled up for making Ger-

man propaganda, for insulting every man who fought in France, and for confusing our ideas about things that we thought were all settled long ago.

GOVERNOR SMITH of New York has rendered his fellow-citizens a service by calling attention to the scandalous inequalities in the electoral system of the State. Mr. Smith was elected by a plurality of half a million votes. He believed that this vote constituted a mandate to carry out certain reformatory measures on which he had based his appeal to the public, including the abolition of the inquisitorial Lusk Laws and the restoration of the direct primary. His programme has been successfully blocked by the State Assembly, in which the Republicans still have a majority, though in the aggregate the Democratic candidates for the Assembly polled nearly 200,000 more votes than their Republican opponents.

THE reason for this gross misrepresentation in the State Assembly lies in the peculiar arrangement of the assembly-districts. In New York City the population of the various assembly-districts runs from 75,000 to 150,000. In each of twenty-five up-State districts, less than 30,000 people are entitled to be represented by an Assemblyman; and one county with only 12,000 inhabitants has the same representation in the Assembly as a city district with ten or twelve times its population. This system of partial disfranchisement of the urban population is maintained because it serves admirably the purposes of privilege and its political underlings. When privilege wishes a fresh opportunity to mulct the inhabitants of the wealthiest city in the world, it calls upon the up-State political hierarchy to deliver the votes of its Assemblymen from the rotten boroughs, over whom the unfortunate metropolitan victims have no influence whatever. Thus privilege waxes fat and the up-State politicians wax fat at the expense of the common man in the city of dreadful public services.

RECENTLY we voiced a modest plea that editors and publicists who advocate the League of Nations attempt some adequate reply to serious criticisms of the League; and in this connexion we cited certain arguments against a league of political Governments, made by Principal L. P. Jacks in the *Atlantic Monthly*. To our challenge, the *New York World* responds editorially that Mr. Jacks and the *Freeman* are "ignorant of the facts and destitute of political sense." This is all very well, as far as it goes, but it is hardly an adequate answer to our request. The League about which our neighbour in Park Row displays such persistent enthusiasm has been in operation since the war; and to get the measure of it, one scarcely needs more than the news-dispatches setting forth the state of Europe from day to day. We commend to the editors of the *World* a careful perusal of these dispatches from their own files; and we ask them to follow up this study with a dispassionate analysis of the principal accomplishments of the League as set forth in the current speeches of Lord Robert Cecil, its salesman extraordinary. These accomplishments, we believe the editorial brethren must admit, are mighty thin.

The editors can not be responsible for manuscripts submitted, but if return postage be enclosed, they will do all in their power to see that rejected manuscripts are returned promptly.

It is not to be understood that articles signed with a name, pseudonym, or initials necessarily agree with the opinion of the editors, either in substance or style. They are printed because in the editors' judgment, they are intrinsically worth reading.

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TOPICS OF THE TIME.

A SALESMAN DE LUXE.

AFTER a period of secret communion with editors and bankers, Lord Robert Cecil has emerged upon the public platform to display his political wares and his engaging personality before the gaze of the vulgar. He is not such an heroic figure as M. Clemenceau, who came to us some months back to sell a somewhat similar line of goods; but on the whole he seems more persuasive, perhaps because he has a subtler technique. The earnestness of his manner is assisted by his presence, for in appearance he is, like our own Mr. Will Rogers, of a prepossessing homeliness; and if he does not, like Mr. Rogers, jump amazingly through a looped rope, he displays an equal agility in evading the entanglements of logic. Undoubtedly he is the most accomplished salesman of the many that Europe has sent over to impress us with its somewhat questionable stock.

It is a partnership that Lord Robert comes to offer us, a full partnership in the League of Governments. Here Lord Robert's persuasiveness labours under some disability. It was only a few years ago that we entered into a partnership with these same associates. For two reasons, the venture left us in a dismal state of mind. In the first place, the character of the business was not as originally nominated in the bond. In the second place, the enterprise was disastrous to us financially; in fact we are still compelled to dig into our pockets to the extent of a billion dollars a year, in order to pay the interest on our losses. Moreover, our partners borrowed ten billion dollars from us on no security whatever, and, with one possible exception, none of them has given any indication of either desire or ability to pay back its borrowings. One is reminded in this connexion of the occasion when Mr. Morris Perlmutter was invited to take as a partner the son-in-law of one of the members of the firm of Zudrowsky and Cohen. As Abe Potash pointed out to Mr. Perlmutter, the reputation of Zudrowsky and Cohen was such that "you wouldn't trust them the wrapping paper on a C. O. D. shipment of two dollars." The American people may not know much about the intricacies of European affairs; but against going into partnership with European politicians, they cherish an aversion similar to that expressed by Abe Potash against the son-in-law of Zudrowsky and Cohen. In fact, within recent memory, in what Mr. Woodrow Wilson called "a solemn referendum" on the subject, they registered their sentiment against partnership by a majority of seven million. Possibly Lord Robert, with the aid of his banking and editorial friends, may overcome this prejudice, but the odds are against him.

By way of bringing home to us the blessings of membership in the League, Lord Robert puts great emphasis on the curse of war, that "horrible and devilish thing." In demonstrating that war is wholly unpleasant and undesirable for the general population, Lord Robert is thoroughly convincing. There seems little question that he is sincerely opposed to war, or at least to large wars. In fact one enthusiastic newspaper, upon his arrival, hailed him as the angel of peace. In his monitions about war, however, we have noted that Lord Robert carefully avoids trespassing on one topic, the causes of war. Apparently he is not interested in the causes of war. We have recently passed through an international Kilkenny fight in which all the principal nations were engaged; what with diplomatic indiscretions, the publication of secret documents, and other revelations, the casual background is

fairly complete. One would think that a first step towards avoiding future wars would be a dispassionate, searching analysis of the causes of the world-war, and a careful study of possible means to eliminate the practices and methods that bred that war and are breeding others. Lord Robert and his League have avoided this plain method as a certain personage is said to avoid holy water. In fact, Lord Robert's prescription for peace is to give more power to the very agencies that fomented the last war.

"The League," announced Lord Robert, in his maiden speech in this country, "has been the means of settling several grave international disputes." Here it seemed that our visitor was getting down to brass tacks, and with high expectation one sped to his next phrases. What were these "grave international disputes" so happily nipped in the bud? Lord Robert speedily informed us. The League had saved Albania from invasion; it was planning to save Austria from bankruptcy. This was his impressive list. Well, the population of Albania is equal to that of Rhode Island; the population of Austria is equal to that of Ohio. An invasion of Albania, deplorable as it may be, is scarcely of grave international import. As for Austria, we recall that when Austrian children were dying of starvation, the League displayed no great concern; but when Austrian banks, in which British interests predominate, threatened to perish of anæmia, the League suddenly awoke to activity and referred the matter to a commission headed by a heavily interested British financier. When one considers that when Poland invaded Russia on a land-grabbing expedition, the members of the League gave the invader their blessing; that when Poland snatched Lithuanian territory the League sanctioned the thievery; that when Greece hurled her forces into Asia Minor the League did nothing; and that when M. Poincaré seized the Ruhr, the League did not even dare to talk about it; when one considers the record of the League in these really important imperialistic outbreaks, Albania and Austria seem pretty small potatoes. Indeed, one feels that Lord Robert committed a tactical error in going into specific instances. He would be more convincing, one thinks, were he merely to smile and smile and be a liberal.

At the conclusion of Lord Robert's address, one of his auditors had the temerity to ask him whether he was prepared to advocate the scrapping of imperialism in the East, particularly in such places as Egypt, India and Mesopotamia, where alien rule rests wholly upon armed forces. Lord Robert answered promptly that he was opposed to "any policy which I could describe as imperialistic." He added, however, that he would not advocate the abandonment by a great Power of "any trust undertaken on behalf of a weak and struggling people," and that he "would not advocate any policy which would hand over the populations of great districts to disorder, bloodshed and slaughter." This is a splendid moral view; and it is unfortunate that the lesser peoples are so steeped in barbarism that they do not also appreciate what a blessing it is to be murdered and robbed by civilized foreigners rather than by one another. It is a view which shows that Lord Robert's heart is in the right place. "If I have blackjacked you and seem to be sitting on your chest and relieving you of your valuables," remarked the highwayman, "it is merely an exhibition of altruism. Had I let you pass in peace, you might have fallen and hurt yourself, smashed your watch and lost your money."

It is encouraging to find a politician so heartily opposed to war and imperialism as Lord Robert. His

speeches and interviews here have given us an excellent measure of his quality, his wonderful mental ductility. The impression is not different from that to be derived from the recent debate in Parliament, in which he took part, on ways and means for devising some sort of intervention in the Ruhr, to save Europe from falling into ultimate chaos. "When the League of Nations is proposed as the proper authority to intervene," wrote Mr. Arthur Ponsonby, M.P., in reporting the debate, "then Lord Robert says no. When something else is proposed, then Lord Robert says the League of Nations."

Perhaps Lord Robert may sell his plan of partnership in the League to the gentlemen, not always visible to the public eye, who guide the destinies of the American people. With the great American herd, still staggering under the burdensome debts piled up during the recent war-time association with European Governments, he will need all the charm and subtlety he possesses—and more. The general feeling of the population seems to be similar to that of Mr. Potash towards his sometime business associate, Pincus Vesell. "That feller," said Abe, "got an idee that there ain't nothing in the cloak and suit business but auction pinochle and taking out-of-town customers to the theayter"; and later in a reminiscent vein, he remarked: "He's the kind of feller that if we would part friends, he would come back every week and touch me for five dollars yet."

"I do not ask you to enter the League," says our persuasive visitor, with characteristic directness. "I merely ask if you can afford to stay out." After some simple financial calculation, we'll say we can.

WHO'S GOT THE ISSUE?

NEVER, perhaps, has any presidential campaign opened more auspiciously than the one that is now being launched upon the country. The combined genius of the reporters for the *Times*, the *Tribune* and the *Herald* has not sufficed to squeeze an issue out of the speech which Mr. Harding delivered the other day at Augusta. The President is warming up for his tour of the Western States, and this, apparently, is the sort of thing we are to have from him:

Our first concern is with domestic relations. There need be no worry about *international relations*. I am confident that they were never better than to-day. Of course, we are not so involved in old world affairs as some would have us, but I am confident that this will be the verdict of Europe, the Europe that is going to right herself, that the Republic of the United States is the most just and righteous nation in the world.

With this bit of fine futility, the President dismissed the question of international alliances and entanglements; but in order to make it clear just how significant this dismissal is, we must call attention to another item which two of the papers, with unconscious irony, appended to the report of Mr. Harding's speech. This second report quotes a statement of ex-Senator Hitchcock to the effect that, although affiliation with the League of Nations will never again be an issue in a presidential campaign, the American Government will nevertheless make an easy and natural approach to the League, and will eventually join up with it.

Thus it appears that Mr. Hitchcock is as favourably disposed as ever towards the League; while Mr. Harding, with his enthusiasm for the World Court, is coming to take a favourable attitude toward inter-governmentalism. In another respect, however, these two gentlemen are in still closer agreement; that is,

neither of them pays very much attention to the last plebiscite on the Wilsonian programme, and neither is disposed to put the question of foreign relations once more to a vote. In fact, they both seem to prefer that the decision should be worked out in "an easy and natural manner," while the attention of the public is centred elsewhere.

As we meditate upon this situation, something tells us that a composite photograph of Mr. Harding, Mr. Hitchcock, and the other professional Republicans and Democrats, would exhibit a smoothish person in the act of sliding around an issue. At Augusta, Mr. Harding said quite frankly that he didn't want the political situation all messed up with questions in which people are really interested. He deplored the growth of social classes and political blocs, because such groups seek selfishly to gain, rather than to serve. With admirable lucidity, he said (we quote verbatim from his speech as reported in the press): "In the development of class under the modification of political systems there is no greater menace."

As an example of the disinterested service that may be expected of officials who represent no class or bloc, Mr. Harding mentioned the Administration's support of the ship-subsidy bill. In fact, he did about everything that anyone could do to discourage people from trying to get things by voting for them; and then, perhaps in the hope of persuading his hearers to vote anyhow, for nothing in particular, he undertook to explain what he meant when he first used that good old word "normalcy."

I meant that the American people must return to a normal temperature after the fever heat of war, the excesses of inflation and the distresses of deflation, and the intoxication of mere money-making. I hoped, and still hope, that in God's providence and by the common sense of this Republic, we would get back into the ways of a sane people, with abundance of employment and every one engaged in useful, creative pursuits. I hoped for a round of contentment with it all, that America might pursue the highest ways, that men might go forward in a proud procession of confident Americans.

Now what do our readers think? Is it really true that normalcy is to be the issue in the great campaign of 1924?

A DISCIPLE OF DR. PANGLOSS.

AFTER having laboured since September, 1921, a committee appointed by President Harding's conference on unemployment has produced a plan for preventing those crises in business that have a way of arriving on the heels of "good times." The plan, issued with a foreword by Secretary Hoover, seems to place a good deal of hope in the publication of statistics that may serve as a warning of approaching danger; though there are so-called constructive proposals, such as the idea, already launched by Mr. Hoover, of delaying public improvements, and extensions by big corporations, until those hard times occur which the new devices are guaranteed to prevent!

This paper is inclined to concur in the doubts that seem to exist regarding the efficacy of such a plan. The recommendations follow conventional lines; that is, they call for the creation of new offices, and for a further increase in the control of private business by the State. Clerks are to be set to work collecting data regarding the stocks on hand of cotton, hides, iron, steel, zinc, copper and coal as well as textiles, shoes, etc. The trend of prices and the tendency of money-rates are to be studied; new rules are to be laid down for the banks, in the hope of preventing inflation; and

a national system of employment-bureaux is to be created. Unfortunately, none of these measures is calculated to increase production or to open a wider field of opportunity.

Without questioning Mr. Hoover's skill in dealing with a given problem of distribution, one may fairly question whether dictatorship, either by individuals or by governmental bureaux, is the most economical way of meeting the intricate requirements of trade. If we have been critical of the Secretary of Commerce, it is because his interest has centred in what seem to us the superficial aspects of the problems he has had to face. His point of view is set forth at some length in a series of articles that have been appearing in the press. They are written in the limpid style made familiar by Mr. Hoover's chief, and they help us to understand why we are offered the kind of legislation outlined in the report of the committee. Mr. Hoover's main theme is a glorification of what he calls American individualism, and offers as the only safe brand on the market. It alone, we are assured, is based upon equality of opportunity, in contrast with the kind of individualism that took *laissez-faire* for its motto and is supposed by Mr. Hoover to be equivalent to "the devil take the hindmost."

We are blessed, says Mr. Hoover, in being assured "through Government" of the enjoyment of "liberty, justice, intellectual welfare, equality of opportunity, and stimulation to service." Governmental supervision is necessary, he thinks, "to restrain the destructive instincts while strengthening and enlarging those of altruistic character and constructive impulse." Our anti-trust laws, and the mass of regulations affecting public utilities, he regards as a monument to our "intent to preserve our equality of opportunity." Thanks to the "free-running mills of competition," the creative minds upon which our prosperity depends rise to the top by the process of selection—a selection he it observed, that has landed in Mr. Harding's Cabinet a majority of its distinguished thinkers.

Mr. Hoover admits that there might be some cause of uneasiness in the pressure brought to bear upon the State by great corporations, if it were not that "our American demand for equality of opportunity is a constant militant check upon capital becoming a thing to be feared." Moreover, even granting "a fringe of injustices," what can it signify when the workers are being more and more thoughtfully cared for, when the moral standards of business are improving, political corruption diminishing, the public conscience exerting itself ever more vigorously, "while none of us is either hungry or cold or without a place to lay his head"?

We must confess that this complacent optimism leaves us cold in view of the steady encroachment upon individual rights practised by Governments. Mr. Hoover and the committee on unemployment are satisfied that business-upheavals are due to waste, extravagance, speculation, inflation, overexpansion and inefficiency in production; but what if these faults are but symptoms of interferences with natural laws which, if permitted free play, would preserve the equilibrium of trade as the tides maintain the level of the sea? The terms liberty, justice, and equality of opportunity can be used only in a fanciful sense where the population is divided into landlords and landless, where the attempt is made to confine trade within national boundaries, and where confusing regulations and prohibitions prevent the demand for goods from determining the supply, and throw out of gear the check of competition upon waste and extravagance.

President Harding is at least dealing in realities when he instructs the Tariff Commission to decide whether there is any relation between the tariff on sugar and the current prices, and promises to reduce the tax if there is ground for believing that the tariff is a help to the profiteers. This sensible move encourages us to recommend to the creative minds of the Administration a closer study of the despised doctrine of *laissez-faire*, which originated with Gournay, the practical man of affairs, and inspired the reforms carried out by Turgot, who described it as a means of giving back to all branches of trade "that precious freedom of which they have been deprived by centuries of ignorant prejudice" and by "the facility of Government in lending itself to private interests." The increased competition among sellers, which would result from sweeping away privileges and monopolies, would, argued Turgot, ensure the greatest perfection in the quality of goods and the most advantageous price for the buyer. The seller would be equally benefitted by a reciprocal competition among buyers when every outlet for his commodity should be opened; and the share of the workers would be increased because of the greater demand for labour.

If the individual may be considered the best judge of what is favourable to his own interest, surely no change can be satisfactory that does not lead towards the goal of free labour, free industry and free trade. But the condition to which Mr. Hoover gives the name of American individualism falls so far short of this ideal that it ought in fact to be described as American State Socialism. We believe it was Boileau who said, "*La rime est un esclave et ne doit qu'obéir.*" Politicians have not hesitated to condemn economic terms to a more humiliating servitude.

SCRIBES AND PHARISEES.

OCCASIONALLY we hesitate to comment on current phenomena of hatred or prejudice, for fear of adding fuel to this sort of unprofitable combustion. Perhaps little is to be gained by attempting to analyse the recent outburst of moral indignation that echoed throughout what is hopefully called the civilized world, upon the execution, after a public trial and conviction, of a Russian citizen who bears the title of Monsignor in the Roman Catholic Church. In ordinary times, even though in the trial all the legal proprieties had been complied with, such a chorus of protestations might be taken to indicate an admirably humane feeling.

Yet we confess to a certain scepticism about this sudden far-echoing humanitarianism on the part of politicians, editors and prelates. In this turbulent twentieth-century world of ours, governmental violence is common and governmental executions, even in wholesale lots, are not unusual. The Government of Greece recently executed without the formality of a public trial a whole batch of the leading members of the preceding Government. In Hungary, Finland, and other newly-established nations, the public executioners seem to have had little time for rest during the past few years. The present Italian Government came to power after a considerable period of terrorism on the part of its supporters, in which arson and murder were of everyday occurrence. Every few days we read that the Government of France has utilized its military firing-squads to shuffle off a few more German citizens. The Government of the Irish Free State, without bothering itself with public court-procedure or even in some cases giving adequate explanation of its reasons, has, during the past few months, put to death nearly seventy political prisoners, including some of the most

distinguished citizens of Ireland. The British Government in India recently sentenced to be hanged 172 natives who were arrested after a fracas which resulted when imperial British forces fired on a peaceable meeting of 2500 non-coöperators. In Egypt, the British military tribunals, sitting behind locked doors, have been steadily grinding out their grist of death-sentences. Amid all this welter of official blood-letting, the affair of Monsignor Butchkavitch in Russia seems scarcely as extraordinary as the news-dispatches would make it.

Though denunciations of the verdict were carried *in extenso*, the trial of Monsignor Butchkavitch and his associates was somewhat sketchily reported in the American press, and one could get no clear idea of the legal process. From the early dispatches one gathered that the defendants were accused of resisting, and advocating violent resistance to, officers of the Russian Government charged with conducting the levy on certain valuables of the church, for famine-relief. Later there were more or less vague suggestions of political implications in the case. It appeared that Monsignor Butchkavitch had conducted correspondence with persons in Poland during the Polish war, and had received large sums of money from Poland. Shortly after the close of the trial, a statement from the Central Executive Committee, the governing board of directors of Russia, declared that he had been proved guilty of treasonable correspondence with the Polish Government during the Russo-Polish war. In the eyes of a political Government this is a serious transgression; we can well imagine what would have been the fate of, let us say, an American Lutheran clergyman of German descent who had conducted a correspondence with German politicians and received sums of money from German sources while Mr. Wilson was making the world safe for democracy. On the other hand Mr. Francis McCullagh, Moscow correspondent of the New York Herald, has expressed the opinion that the proof of the political charges was inadequate. He asserts that the prosecution was "on religious grounds alone"; and he cites particularly a Soviet law, to which we have not previously seen any reference, which he declares makes it a crime to give religious instruction to persons under eighteen years old. These statements of Mr. McCullagh throw the whole matter into greater confusion, especially in view of the recent agreement of the Soviet Government with the Vatican, giving the Catholic Church a charter to carry on in Russia, where formerly it was virtually blocked by the monopoly enjoyed by the official Russian Church under the Tsars. Mr. McCullagh's contention seems the more extraordinary because the Soviet Government has plainly pursued the Machiavellian policy of encouraging the activities of other sects in opposition to the Tsarist Church. We have been informed on excellent authority that the membership of Protestant churches in Russia has doubled since the revolution. Individual Communists may be as heartily opposed to organized religion as Bob Ingersoll or Tom Paine; but as politicians they have not neglected the chance to furnish opportunity for a division of religious opinion. A persecution of the Catholic Church would indicate a sudden and inexplicable shift in this policy.

By a curious coincidence, the news of this execution came at a time when the few American newspapers that showed any interest in the fate of Martin Tabert were relating the story of this boy who, for the slight offence of stealing a ride on a freight train, was sentenced to three months as a convict-labourer in a privately owned lumber-camp in Florida, where he

fell ill and was beaten to death. It appeared that this practice of farming out county prisoners was general in Florida, and that it served the interest of the local authorities to furnish as many peons of this sort as they could lay their hands on. Citizens reported that the nightly beatings in the convict-camps could be heard half a mile away. One would think that this barbarous and inhumane custom would arouse the concern of every American who was zealous for his country's good name. Yet the distinguished American humanitarians who were most emphatic in their denunciation of the execution in Russia, had never a word to say about the murder in Florida. Archbishop Hayes declared that "the legalized murder of Monsignor Butchkavitch is a terrible indictment of the Soviet policy." Bishop Manning said that "it brings into a clear light the unspeakable wickedness of the present Russian regime." Neither of these prelates, apparently, cared to draw any conclusions about American institutions from the murder of Martin Tabert in Florida; and as far as we know, neither has made any protest against the practice of the American Government of holding in jail political prisoners who have been sentenced to ten or twenty years imprisonment for the expression of opinion.

This paper holds in complete abhorrence the impudence of elected persons who arrogate to themselves the power to imprison or execute human beings for political reasons. We are opposed to such practices even for political offences in war-time, whether the victim be prelate or pauper, whether his name be Butchkavitch or Roger Casement. We believe that governmental prosecutions for opinion, be it political, economic or religious, are wholly vicious and inexcusable, whether conducted in Russia or Berrien County, Michigan, or elsewhere. If we do not fulminate as loudly as some of our neighbours about the somewhat confusing reports of what purports to be a political trial in Moscow, it is because we have a feeling that before shunting any large stones at the Soviet Government, we have a bit of a job in moral sanitation to attend to in the United States. Humanitarianism is one of the things that should begin at home.

MISCELLANY.

THE SWEDISH ROYAL OPERA COMPANY, I note, has just celebrated the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of its founding, with a festival programme which included one act from Uttini's "Thetis and Pelée," an opera performed by the original company 150 years ago. In giving this act, the company even went to the length of reproducing the scenery, with all the somewhat crude effects of eighteenth-century theatrical production, much to the amusement of the audience. No doubt, to a twentieth-century audience, accustomed to the smooth and comparatively noiseless mechanical arrangements of the modern stage, a creaking eighteenth-century production would seem pretty naïve and archaic on its mechanical side—as naïve and archaic, perhaps, as our modern settings in the style of posters by Mr. Maxfield Parrish may look to the theatre- or opera-goer of a century hence. When all is said and done, however, "the play's the thing"; and although the modern advances in the mechanical technique of the theatre are not to be scoffed at, I for one would be willing to exchange them all for one composer of operas such as the eighteenth century produced; and I should not demand a Mozart at that.

LATELY I have been doing a good deal of reading in the history of Russia; and in the course of this exercise I have become convinced that the historian ought generally

to spend less time in the archives, and more time wandering up and down through the highways and byways of the region that holds his interest. He ought, I think, to follow the example of some of the Russian intelligentsia of the 'seventies, and "go to the people." If he intends to write about Russia, he ought to go out into some village of the steppe, and stay there until he comes to feel, as the literary artist does, the breadth and complexity of the simplest life.

It seems to me that the lack of this feeling is the most notable shortcoming of the historians whose work I have been examining, and perhaps of historians in general. If my meaning is not quite clear, I can perhaps make it so by relating an incident which occurred at the meeting of the American Historical Association, in New Haven last December. I happened to be engaged one day in conversation with a scholar whose abilities I hold in high regard; and I was very much pleased to hear him remark that he was becoming increasingly interested in "intellectual history," or "the history of thought." He believed that this subject should receive more attention in our general histories, and in this I agreed with him; but presently it became evident that his definition of thought was so narrow that only a small minority of mankind would figure in his history as human beings.

TAKING the history of thought in Russia as a case in point, my companion dilated upon the importance of the contest between the Slavophil and the Westward-looking sections of the intelligentsia; but when I suggested that the peasants also had an intellectual life and an intellectual history, apart from all this, which might be studied in the folk-literature and the popular arts, he admitted that he knew nothing about these things, and was little concerned with them. Hence it was plain enough that in any book which this scholar might write on Russia, the intellectuals would appear as human beings with a full circle of human activities, while the peasants would be regarded as an inert mass, merely a phase of the agrarian problem.

For a man with the imagination of an artist, such a distortion of history would be impossible; but even where imagination fails, the historian might perhaps succumb to the evidence of his senses if he were brought into direct contact with the life below stairs. At any rate, I have found that the lightest and flightiest travelogues often show more respect for the humanity of man, than do the heaviest and most profound of histories; and accordingly I suggest that our graduate schools might very properly fit their candidates out with scrip and staff, and send them on a pilgrimage to the people.

JOURNEYMAN.

POETRY.

THE KNIGHT-ERRANT.

I see him passing slowly down the pages
In crazy armour on a scarecrow horse,
More gaunt, more mad, with every passing day,
Peopling the wastes with giants and magicians
And in the peasants of the bare white towns
Finding the stuff for queens and knights and ruffians.
I see him buffeted by unknown fates
And quite material hands, standing amazed,
Unflinching in the universal laughter.
And envying him his wild serenity
I close the book, believing he was wise
To slough his humdrum life, put on his armour
And let old Rosinante pick his path
Into some new, chimerical adventure.

ELIZABETH J. COATSWORTH.

THE CAPTAIN OF INDUSTRY.

THE Captain of Industry is one of the major institutions of the nineteenth century. He has been an institution of civilized life—a self-sufficient element in the scheme of law and custom—in much the same sense as the Crown, or the Country Gentleman, or the Priesthood, have been institutions, or as they still are in those places where the habits of thought which they embody still have an institutional force.¹ For a hundred years or so he was, cumulatively, the dominant figure in civilized life, about whose deeds and interests law and custom has turned, the central and paramount personal agency in Occidental civilization. Indeed, his great vogue and compelling eminence are not past yet, so far as regards his place in popular superstition and in the make-believe of political strategy, but it is essentially a glory standing over out of the past, essentially a superstition.² As regards the material actualities of life, the Captain of Industry is no longer the central and directive force in that business-traffic that governs the material fortunes of mankind; not much more so than the Crown, the Country Gentleman, or the Priesthood.

Considered as an institution, then, the Captain of Industry is the personal upshot of that mobilization of business-enterprise that arose out of the industrial use of the machine-process. And the period of his ascendancy is, accordingly, that era of (temperately) free competition that lies between the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century and the rise of corporation-finance in the nineteenth, and so tapering off into the competitive twilight-zone of the later time when competition was shifting from industry to finance. But in the time of his ascendancy the old-fashioned competitive system came up, flourished, and eventually fell into decay, all under the ministering hand of the Captain.

As is likely to be true of any institution that eventually counts for much in human life and culture, so also the Captain of Industry arose out of small beginnings which held no clear promise of a larger destiny. The prototype rather than the origin of the Captain of Industry is to be seen in the Merchant Adventurer of an earlier age, or as he would be called after he had grown to larger dimensions and become altogether sedentary, the Merchant Prince. In the beginning the Captain was an adventurer in industrial enterprise—hence the name given him—very much as the itinerant merchant of the days of the petty trade had once been an adventurer in commerce. He was a person of insight—perhaps chiefly industrial insight—and of initiative and energy, who was able to see something of the industrial reach and drive of that new mechanical technology that was finding its way into the industries, and who went about to contrive ways and means of turning these technological resources to new uses and a larger efficiency; always with a view to his own gain from turning out a more serviceable product with greater expedition. He was a captain of workmanship at the same time that he was a business man; but he was a good deal of a pioneer in both respects, inasmuch as he was on new ground in both respects. In many of the industrial ventures into which his initiative led him, both the mechanical working and the financial sanity of the new ways and means were yet to be tried out, so that in both respects he was working

¹ An institution is of the nature of a usage which has become axiomatic and indispensable by habituation and general acceptance. Its physiological counterpart would presumably be any one of those habitual additions that are now attracting the attention of the experts in sobriety.

² He is also still a dominant figure in the folk-lore of Political Economy.

out an adventurous experiment rather than watchfully waiting for the turn of events. In the typical case, he was business-manager of the venture as well as foreman of the works, and not infrequently he was the designer and master builder of the equipment, of which he was also the responsible owner.¹ Typical of the work and spirit of these Captains of the early time are the careers of the great tool-builders of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century.²

Such, it is believed, were many of those to whom the mechanical industries owed their rapid growth and sweeping success in the early time, both in production and in earning capacity; and something of this sort is the typical Captain of Industry as he has lived, and still lives, in the affections of his countrymen. Such also is the type-form in terms of which those substantial citizens like to think of themselves, who aspire to the title. If this characterization may appear large and fanciful to an unbelieving generation, at least the continued vogue of it both as a popular superstition and as a business man's day-dream will go to show that the instinct of workmanship is not dead yet even in those civilized countries where it has become eternally right and good that workmanship should wait on business. The disposition to think kindly of workmanlike service is still extant in these civilized nations, at least in their day-dreams; although business-principles have put it in abeyance so far as regards any practical effect.

In fact, it seems to be true that many, perhaps most, of those persons who amassed fortunes out of the proceeds of industry during this early period (say, 1760-1860), and who thereby acquired merit, were not of this workmanlike or pioneering type, but rather came in for large gains by shrewd investment and conservative undertakings, such as would now be called safe and sane business. Yet there will at the same time also have been so much of this spirit of initiative and adventure abroad in the conduct of industry, and it will have been so visible an element of industrial business-as-usual in that time, as to have enabled this type-form of the Captain of Industry to find lodgment in the popular belief; a man of workmanlike force and creative insight into the community's needs, who stood out on a footing of self-help, took large chances for large ideals, and came in for his gains as a due reward for work well done in the service of the common good, in designing and working out a more effective organization of industrial forces and in creating and testing out new and better processes of production. It is by no means easy at this distance to make out how much of popular myth-making went to set up this genial conception of the Captain in the popular mind, or how much more of the same engaging conceit was contributed towards the same preconception by the many-sided self-esteem of many substantial business men who had grown great by "buying in" and "sitting tight," and who would like to believe that they had done something to merit their gains. But however the balance may lie, between workmanship and salesmanship, in the makeup of the common run of those early leaders of industrial enterprise, it seems that there will have been enough of the master workman in a sufficient number of them, and enough of adventure and initiative in a sufficient number of the undertakings, to enable the popular fancy to set up and hold fast this genial belief in the typical Captain of Industry as a creative factor in the advance of the industrial arts; at the same time that the economists

were able presently to set him up, under the name of "Entrepreneur," as a fourth factor of production, along with Land, Labour, and Capital. Indeed, it is on some such ground that men have come to be called "Captains of Industry" rather than captains of business. Experience and observation at any later period could scarcely have engendered such a conception of those absentee owners who control the country's industrial plant and trade on a restricted output.

By insensible degrees, as the volume of industry grew larger, employing a larger equipment and larger numbers of workmen, the business-concerns necessarily also increased in size and in the volume of transactions; personal supervision of the work by the owners was no longer practicable, and personal contact and personal arrangements between the employer-owner and his workmen tapered off into impersonal wage-contracts governed by custom and adjusted to the minimum which the traffic would bear. The employer-owner, an ever increasingly impersonal business-concern, shifted more and more to a footing of accountancy in its relations with the industrial plant and its personnel, and the oversight of the works passed by insensible degrees into the hands of technical experts who stood in a business-relation to the concern, as its employees responsible to the concern for working the plant to such a fraction of its productive capacity as the condition of the market warranted for the time being.

So the function of the entrepreneur, the captain of industry, gradually fell apart in a two-fold division of labour, between the business-manager and the office work on the one side and the technician and industrial work on the other side. Gradually more and more, by this shift and division, the Captain of Industry developed into a captain of business, and that part of his occupation which had given him title to his name and rank as captain of "industry" passed into alien hands. Expert practical men, practical in the way of tangible performance, men who had, or need have, no share in the prospective net gain and no responsibility for the concern's financial transactions, unbusinesslike technicians, began to be drawn into the management of the industry on the tangible side. It was a division of labour and responsibility, between the employer-owners who still were presumed to carry on the business of the concern and who were responsible to themselves for its financial fortunes, and on the other hand the expert industrial men who took over the tangible performance of production and were responsible to their own sense of workmanship.

Industry and business gradually split apart, in so far as concerned the personnel and the day's work. The employer-owners shifted farther over on their own ground as absentee owners, but continued to govern the volume of production and the conditions of life for the working personnel on the businesslike principle of the net gain in terms of price; while the tangible performance of so much work as the absentee owners considered to be wise, fell increasingly under the management of that line of technicians out of which there grew in time the engineering profession, with its many duties, grades, and divisions and its ever increasingly numerous and increasingly specialized personnel. It was a gradual shift and division, of course. So gradual, indeed, that while it had set in in a small way before the close of the eighteenth century, it had not yet been carried out completely and obviously by the close of the nineteenth, even in the greater mechanical industries. In fact, it has not yet been carried through to so rigorous a finish as to have warranted

¹ Cf. "The Engineers and the Price System." Ch. II. "The Industrial System and the Captains of Industry."

² Cf. Roe, "British and American Tool-Builders."

its recognition in the standard economic theories. In the manuals the Captain of Industry still figures as the enterprising investor-technician of the days of the beginning, and as such he still is a certified article of economic doctrine under the caption of the "Entrepreneur."

The industrial arts are a matter of tangible performance directed to work that is designed to be of material use to man, and all the while they are calling for an increasingly exhaustive knowledge of material fact and an increasingly close application to the work in hand. The realities of the technician's world are mechanistic realities, matters of material fact. And the responsibilities of the technician, as such, are responsibilities of workmanship only; in the last resort responsibility to his own sense of workmanlike performance, which might well be called the engineer's conscience. On the other hand, the arts of business are arts of bargaining, effrontery, salesmanship, make-believe, and are directed to the gain of the business man at the cost of the community, at large and in detail. Neither tangible performance nor the common good is a business-proposition. Any material use which his traffic may serve is quite beside the business man's purpose, except indirectly, in so far as it may serve to influence his clientele to his advantage.

But the arts of business, too, call all the while for closer application to the work in hand. Throughout recent times salesmanship has come in for a steadily increasing volume and intensity of attention, and great things have been achieved along that line. But the work in hand in business-traffic is not tangible performance. The realities of the business-world are money-values; that is to say matters of make-believe which have the sanction of law and custom and are upheld by the police in case of need. The business man's care is to create needs to be satisfied at a price paid to himself. The engineer's care is to provide for these needs so far as the business men in the background find their advantage in allowing it. But law and custom have little to say to the engineer, except to keep his hands off the work when the interests of business call for a temperate scarcity.

So, by force of circumstances the Captain of Industry came in the course of time and growth to be occupied wholly with the financial end of those industrial ventures of which he still continued to be the captain. The spirit of enterprise in him took a turn of sobriety. He became patient and attentive to details, with an eye single to his own greater net gain in terms of price. His conduct came to be framed more and more on lines of an alert patience, moderation, assurance, and conservatism, that is to say, his conduct would have to fall into these lines if he was to continue as a Captain under the changing circumstances of the time. Changing circumstances called for a new line of strategy in those who would survive as Captains and come into the commanding positions in the business-community, and so into control of the industrial system. It should perhaps rather be said that the force of changing circumstances worked a change in the character of the Captains by eliminating the Captains of the earlier type from the more responsible positions and favouring the substitution of persons endowed with other gifts and trained to other ideals and other standards of conduct; in short, men more nearly on the order of safe and sane business, such as have continued to be well at home in responsible affairs since then.

Under the changing circumstances the Captains of

Industry of the earlier type fell to second rank, became lieutenants, who presently more and more lost standing, as being irresponsible, fanciful, project makers, footless adventurers, fit only to work out innovations that were of doubtful expediency in a business way, creators of technological disturbances that led to obsolescence of equipment and therefore to shrinkage of assets. Such men are persons whom it is not for the safe and sane Captains of the newer type to countenance; but who should be handled with circumspection and made the most of, as project makers whose restless initiative and immature versatility is counted on to bring about all sorts of unsettling and irritating changes in the conditions of industry; but who may also, now and again, bring in something that will give some patiently alert business man a new advantage over his rivals in business, if he has the luck or the shrewdness to grasp it firmly and betimes. Under the changed circumstances the spirit of venturesome enterprise is more than likely to foot up as a hunting of trouble, and wisdom in business-enterprise has more and more settled down to the wisdom of "watchful waiting."

The changing circumstances by force of which the conduct of industrial business so gradually came under the hands of a saner generation of Captains, actuated more singly by a conservative estimate of the net gain for themselves—these circumstances, so far as they admit of being enumerated in an itemized way, were as follows: (a) the industrial arts, in the mechanical industries, grew gradually into a complex and extensive technology which called for a continually more exhaustive and more exact knowledge of material facts, such as to give rise to engineers, technicians, industrial experts; (b) the scale on which industrial processes were carried out grew greater in the leading industries, so as to require the men in charge to give their undivided attention to the technical conduct, the tangible performance of the work in hand; (c) the business-concerns in which was vested the ownership and control of the industrial equipment and its working also grew larger, carried a larger volume of transactions, took on more of an impersonally financial character, and eventually passed over into the wholly impersonal form of the corporation or joint-stock company, with limited liability; (d) the continued advance of the industrial arts, in range, scope, and efficiency, increased the ordinary productive capacity of the leading industries to such a degree that there was continually less and less question of their being able to supply the market and continually more and more danger that the output would exceed what the market could carry off at prices that would yield a reasonable profit—that is to say the largest obtainable profit; (e) loosely speaking, production had overtaken the market; (f) eventually corporation finance came into action and shifted the point of businesslike initiative and discre-

¹ Doubtless this form of words, "watchful waiting," will have been employed in the first instance to describe the frame of mind of a toad who has reached years of discretion and has found his appointed place along some frequented run where many flies and spiders pass and re-pass on their way to complete that destiny to which it has pleased an all-seeing and merciful Providence to call them; but by an easy turn of speech it has also been found suitable to describe the safe and sane strategy of that mature order of Captains of Industry who are governed by sound business-principles. There is a certain bland sufficiency spread across the face of such a toad so circumstanced, while his comely personal bulk gives assurance of a pyramidal stability of principles.

"And the sons of Mary smile and are blessed—
they know the angels are on their side,
They know in them is the Grace confessed,
and for them are the Mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet, and they hear the Word—
they know how truly the Promise runs.
They have cast their burden upon the Lord,
and—the Lord, He lays it on Martha's sons."

—RUDYARD KIPLING.

tion from the works and their management, and even from the running volume of transactions carried by the business-office of the concern, to the negotiation and maintenance of a running volume of credit; (g) the capitalization of credit with fixed charges, as involved in the corporate organization, precluded shrinkage, recession, or retrenchment of assets or earnings, and so ordinarily precluded a lowering of prices or an undue increase of output—undue for purposes of the net gain. Business-enterprise, therefore, ceased progressively to be compatible with free-swung industrial enterprise, and a new order of businesslike management went progressively into action, and shuffled a new type of persons into the positions of responsibility; men with an eye more single to the main chance at the cost of any whom it may concern.

Among these circumstances that so made for a new order in industrial business the one which is, presumably, the decisive one beyond the rest is the growing productive capacity of industry wherever and so far as the later advances in industrial process are allowed to go into effect. By about the middle of the nineteenth century it can be said without affectation that the leading industries were beginning to be inordinately productive, as rated in terms of what the traffic would bear; that is to say as counted in terms of net gain. Free-swung production, approaching the full productive capacity of the equipment and available man-power, was no longer to be tolerated in ordinary times. It became ever more imperative to observe a duly graduated moderation, and to govern the volume of output, not by the productive capacity of the plant or the working capacity of the workmen, or by the consumptive needs of the consumers, but by what the traffic would bear; which was then habitually and increasingly coming to mean a modicum of unemployment both of the plant and the available man-power. It was coming to be true, increasingly, that the ordinary equipment of industry and the available complement of workmen were not wanted for daily use, but only for special occasions and during seasons of exceptionally brisk trade. Unemployment, in other words sabotage, to use a word of later date, was becoming an everyday care of the business-management in the mechanical industries, and was already on the way to become what it is to-day, the most engrossing care that habitually engages the vigilance of the business-executive. And sabotage can best be taken care of in the large; so that the corporations, and particularly the larger corporations, would be in an especially fortunate position to administer the routine of salutary sabotage. And when the Captain of Industry then made the passage from industrial adventure to corporation financier it became the ordinary care of his office as Captain to keep a restraining hand on employment and output, and so administer a salutary running margin of sabotage on production, at the cost of the underlying population.¹

But the account is not complete with a description of what the Captain of Industry has done towards the standardization of business-methods and the stabilization of industrial enterprise, and of what the new order of business-as-usual has done towards the standardization of the Captain and eventually towards his neutralization and abeyance. As has already been remarked, he was one of the major institutions of the nineteenth century, and as such he has left his mark on the culture of that time and after, in other bear-

ings as well as in the standards of business-enterprise. As has also been remarked above, the Captain of Industry and his work and interests presently became the centre of attention and deference. The Landed Interest, the political buccaneers, and the priesthood, yielded him the first place in affairs and in the councils of the nation, civil and political. With the forward movement from that state of things in which business was conceived to be the servant of industry to that more mature order of things under which industry became the servant of business, and then presently industrial business of the simpler sort became the servant of the big business which lives and moves on the higher level of finance at large—as this progression took effect and reshaped the Captain to its uses, the growth of popular sentiment kept pace with the march of facts, so that the popular ideal came to be the prehensile business man rather than the creative driver of industry; the sedentary man of means, the Captain of Solvency. And all the while the illusions of nationalism allowed the underlying population to believe that the common good was bound up with the business-advantage of these Captains of Solvency, into whose service the national establishment was gradually drawn, more and more unreservedly, until it has become an axiomatic rule that all the powers of government and diplomacy must work together for the benefit of the business-interests of the larger sort. Not that the constituted authorities have no other cares, but these other cares are, after all, in all the civilized nations, in the nature of secondary considerations, matters to be taken care of when and so far as the paramount exigencies of business will allow.

In all this there is, of course, nothing radically new, in principle. In principle it all comes to much the same thing as the older plan which this era of business, big and little, has displaced. So long as nationalism has held sway, the care and affectionate pride of the underlying population has, in effect, ever centred on the due keep of the nation's kept classes. It is only that by force of circumstances the Captain of Industry, or in more accurate words the Captain of Solvency, has in recent times come to be the effectual spokesman and type-form of the kept classes as well as the keeper and dispenser of their keep; very much as the War Lord of the barbarian raids, or the Baron of the Middle Ages, or the Prince of the era of State-making, or the Priesthood early and late in Christendom, have all and several, each in their time, place and degree, stood out as the spokesman and exemplar of the kept classes, and served as the legitimate channel by which the community's surplus product has been drained off and consumed, to the greater spiritual comfort of all parties concerned.

It is only that the superstitions of absentee ownership and business-principles have come into the first place among those "Superstitions of the Herd" which go to make up the spirit of national integrity. The moral excellence and public utility of the kept classes that now march under the banners of absentee ownership and business-enterprise are no more to be doubted by the loyal citizens of the Christian nations to-day than the similar excellence and utility of the princely establishment and the priestly ministrations which have drained the resources of the underlying population in an earlier and ruder age. And the princes of solvency and free income no more doubt their own excellence and utility than the princes of the divine grace or the prelates of the divine visitations have done in their time. It is only a shifting of the primacy among the civilized institutions, with the effect that the princes and the

¹ As some one with a taste for slang and aphorism has said, In the beginning the Captain of Industry set out to do something and in the end he sat down to do somebody.

priests of the Grace and the Mercy, now habitually creep in under the now impervious cloak of the prince and priest of business; very much as the business-adventurer of an earlier day crept in under the sheltering cloak of the prince and the priest, of the Grace and the Mercy, on whom the superstitions that were dominant in that time then bestowed the usufruct of the underlying population. For in the nineteenth century the captain of business became, in the popular apprehension, a prince after the order of Melchisedec, holding the primacy in secular and spiritual concerns.

Men are moved by many impulses and driven by many instinctive dispositions. Among these abiding dispositions are a strong bent to admire and defer to persons of achievement and distinction, as well as a workmanlike disposition to find merit in any work that serves the common good. The distinction which is admired and deferred to may often be nothing more to the point than a conventional investiture of rank attained by the routine of descent, as, e. g., a king, or by the routine of seniority, as, e. g., a prelate.

There is commonly no personal quality which a bystander can distinguish in these personages. The case of the Mikado in the times of the Shogunate is perhaps extreme, but it can by no means be said to be untrue or unfair as an illustrative instance of how the predilection for deference will find merit even in a personage who, for all that is known of him, has no personal attributes, good, bad, or indifferent. The kings and prelates of Christendom are only less perfect instances of the same. It is in these cases a matter of distinction, of course, with no hint of achievement, except such achievement as a loyal deference is bound to impute.¹ It is usual, indeed it seems inevitable, in all such instances of the conventional exaltation of nothing-in-particular, that there is also imputed to the person who so becomes a personage something in the way of service to the common good. Men like to believe that the personages whom they so admire by force of conventional routine are also of some use, as well as of great distinction—that they even somehow contribute, or at least conduce, to the material well-being at large. Which is presumably to be set down as one of the wonders wrought by the instinct of workmanship, which will not let men be content without some colourable serviceability in the personages which they so create out of nothing-in-particular.

But where there is also achievement, great deeds according to that fashion of exploits that has the vogue for the time being, this will of itself create distinction and erect a personage. Such is the derivation of the Captain of Industry in the nineteenth century. Men had learned, at some cost, that their exalted personages created *ad hoc* by incantation were of something less than no use to the common good, that at the best and cheapest they were something in the nature of a blameless bill of expense. The civilized nations had turned democratic, so much of them as had a fairly colourable claim to be called civilized; and so they had been left without their indispensable complement of personages to whom to defer and to whom to impute merit. In so far as the ground had been cleared of institutional hold-over from pre-democratic times, there remained but one workable ground of distinction on which a practicable line of personages at large could be erected, such as would meet the ever-insistent

need of some intoxicating make-believe of the kind. Democratically speaking, distinction at large could be achieved only in the matter of ownership, but when ownership was carried well out along the way of absentee ownership it was found to do very nicely as a base on which to erect a colourable personage, sufficient to carry a decently full charge of imputed merit.² It results that under the ægis of democracy one's betters must be better in point of property qualifications, from which the civic virtues flow by ready force of imputation.

So the Captain of Industry came into the place of first consequence and took up the responsibilities of exemplar, philosopher and friend at large to civilized mankind; and no man shall say that he has not done as well as might be expected. Neither has he fallen short in respect of a becoming gravity through it all. The larger the proportion of the community's wealth and income which he has taken over, the larger the deference and imputation of merit which are his, and the larger and graver that affable condescension and stately benevolence that habitually adorn the character of the large Captains of Solvency. There is no branch or department of the humanities in which the substantial absentee owner is not competent to act as guide, philosopher and friend, whether in his own conceit or in the estimation of his underlying population—in art and literature, in Church and State, in science and education, in law and morals—and the underlying population is well content. And nowhere does the pecuniary personage stand higher or more secure as the standard container of the civic virtues than in democratic America; as should be the case, of course, since America is the most democratic of them all. And nowhere else does the captain of big business rule the affairs of the nation, civil and political, and control the conditions of life so unreservedly as in democratic America; as should also be the case, inasmuch as the acquisition of absentee ownership is, after all, in the popular apprehension, the most meritorious and the most necessary work to be done in this country.

THORSTEIN VEBLEN.³

SIR JOHN MANDEVILLE.

ALTHOUGH it has been proved beyond all manner of dispute that Sir John Mandeville, Knight, from the county town of St. Albans, England, was a most villainous and unconscionable plagiarist, there yet remains in the famous account that he has given us of his travels a residuum of his whimsical and sturdy personality. It is, of course, just this fact which explains the singular popularity the book has always enjoyed. William of Boldensele, Oderic de Pordenone, Albert of Aix might publish to their hearts' content descriptions of foreign lands which they had visited; but before their pages could gain any appreciable attention, it would seem that they required to be stamped by the idiosyncratic thumb of Sir John. Once they had had this good fortune, their circulation was ensured. It has been stated that there are extant more fifteenth-century manuscripts of Mandeville's travels than any other book except the Bible.

Of late years there have arisen critics who do not

¹ As a blameless instance of this human avidity for deference and exaltation of personages, a certain Square on Manhattan Island has lately been renamed in honour of a certain military personage who was once, in an emergency, appointed to high rank and responsibility because there was nothing better available under the routine of seniority, and of whose deeds and attainments the most laudatory encomium has found nothing substantially better to say than that it might have been worse. And it is by no means an isolated case.

² Exception may be taken to all this, to the effect that the requisite personages can always be found in the shape of gentlemen at large—"country gentlemen" or "Southern Gentlemen," or what not—and "Best Families" who sit secure on a prescriptive gentility of birth and breeding. But in this bearing and seen in impersonal perspective Gentlemen and Best Families are best to be defined as "absentee ownership in the consumptive phase," just as the Captain of Industry may likewise be spoken of impersonally as absentee ownership in the acquisitive phase; which brings the case back to the point of departure.

³ This and further articles by Mr. Veblen which will appear in future issues are chapters from a forthcoming book.—EDITORS.

know Sir John Mandeville and who even go so far as to transfer the honours attached to the writing of his fascinating volume to the sly pen of a scurvy Liège notary. There are, however, several circumstances which go to confuse so teasing and tardy a supposition. We have good reason to believe, for example, that the Abbey Church of St. Albans, England, treasured for many centuries a sapphire ring bequeathed to it by Sir John himself who in his lifetime, as we know, lay much store by such gawds. Also, if D'Outremeuse, or as he sometimes styled himself, Jean des Preis, actually succeeded in promulgating a hoax which deceived the world for four centuries, how comes it about that the monumental inscription on a Sir John Mandeville's tomb near Liège should so strangely coincide with what we know of the traditional author? This historic tomb appears to have remained intact up to the latter end of the eighteenth century. It was in the church of Guillemins; and thanks to the researches of Dr. A. Bovenschen, we know that the epitaph upon it read somewhat after the following manner: "Here lies the gentle Sir John Mandeville, otherwise called With the Beard, Knight, Lord of Camp(er) di, a native of England. He was learned in physic, much addicted to prayer, and left large legacies to the poor. After travelling nearly all over the world, he died in Liège on December 17th, 1372."

But whether or not Sir John Mandeville, himself, in flesh and blood, did actually look for the last time at the white cliffs of England on Michaelmas Day, 1322, the strange world presented to our eyes in these pages seems real and palpable enough; albeit "it turneth in the firmament as doth a wheel that turneth by his axle tree" and has as its central point the city of Jerusalem! It was indeed small wonder that he deemed the Holy City to be the navel of the earth, for from the first, the conception of Christianity as the startling explanation of the mystery of life fascinated his imagination. His fancy delighted to play about any manifestations which seemed to confirm what he conceived to be this amazing pivotal truth. He liked nothing better than to linger in meditative mood over the physical proofs of such a miraculous intervention. With infinite satisfaction he recorded the strange fact that the words, "Jesu Christ shall be born of the Virgin Mary, and I trow him," were found inscribed upon the coffin of Hermogenes, the wise, though it had been lain underground several centuries before the coming of our Lord.

With such arcana revolving continually through his mind, there is small wonder that he first turned his steps in the direction of Palestine or the "Land of Promission" as he so quaintly calls it. What a delightful tone, so ingeniously devotional, takes possession of his pen whenever he has had occasion to write of that sacred portion of the earth's surface!

"Well may that land be called delectable and a fructurous land, that was be-bleed and moisted with the precious blood of our Lord Jesu Christ . . . for more precious chattel ne greater ransome ne might he put for us, than his blessed body."

In his wayfaring through Palestine, his chief preoccupation is to see and handle each and every material object that had been connected with the Son of God during his brief sojourn on earth thirteen hundred years before. Indeed, with that naïve love of reality which so often characterizes Anglo-Saxons, he allows no scrap of wood or stone, consecrated by a holy contact, to escape his scrutiny. With absorbed concentration he looks down upon that rock "upon which Our Lady sat and learned her Psalter." He searches out the very tree upon which Judas Iscariot hanged himself, and finds it to be a simple, costive-smelling elder. At Bethlehem he sees "the crib of the

ox and the ass" who, alone of all the animals, had been privileged to be present at the birth of a god. At Nazareth, he trudges across the scorched Asiatic veldt, so that he may inspect Gabriel's Well, "where Our Lord was wont to bathe him, when he was young, and from that well bare he water often-time to his mother. And in that well she washed often-time the clouts of her Son Jesu Christ." On returning to Jerusalem, he climbs the mount where is to be seen the last morsel of the earth to receive pressure from Our Lord's foot before he ascended into the sky. "And from that mount steyd Our Lord Jesu Christ to heaven upon Ascension Day, and yet there sheweth the shape of his left foot in the stone."

Many readers will perhaps be puzzled to know how Sir John Mandeville managed to be wandering about so casually in a country which was, during the fourteenth century, completely under the sway of the Saracens. He himself clears up the point by informing us that he had in his possession letters from the Sultan "with his great seal" which contained instructions that he and his company should be received "buxomly" wherever they went. Indeed, his relations with the Sultan seem always to have been as cordial as possible. On one of Sir John's visits to his palace, we are told that the Eastern potentate went so far as "to let void out of his chamber all manner of men, Lords, and others" for no better reason than that his discourse with his philosophic guest might be uninterrupted. On this occasion he told the curious traveller much that was extremely interesting, and also not a little astonishing to the ears of a man brought up in a simple English shire. With regard to immortality, his people believed, so he told the good Knight, "that they should have fair houses and noble, every man after his desert . . . and every man should have four score wives, all maidens, and he shall have ado every day with them, and yet he shall find them always maidens." Nor did he refrain from telling Sir John some home truths; pointing out to him that in practice the manner of living of those in Christendom fell far short of what they professed: "For the commons, upon festival days when they should go to church to serve God, then go to taverns." Are we perhaps justified in conjecturing that it was nothing less than the testiness of an evil conscience which caused Sir John at this point to close the conversation with the somewhat ungracious remark that, after all, Mohammed was but "a poor knave that kept camels"?

Sir John Mandeville visits Egypt, and takes pleasure in looking at the Nile; that river which, together with the Ganges and Euphrates, he surmizes has its source in "Paradise terrestrial." He stays with the Sultan of Egypt for an indefinite period, actually taking service under him in his warfare with the Bedouins. His military activities, however, in no way interfere with his observations of nature. "About the river [Nile] be many birds and fowls as sikonies that they clepen ibes." It is from his pen that we have the one exact and authentic description of the Phoenix which exists. "This bird men see often-time fly in these countries . . . he hath a crest of feathers upon his head more great than the peacock hath . . . and he is a full fair bird to look upon, against the sun, for he shineth full gloriously and nobly."

In his outspoken way he puts us at once in touch with the geographical peculiarities of the countries he visits: "And wit well, that the realm of Arabia is a full great country, but therein is over much desert." He is equally emphatic with regard to the various races he encounters. On his way to Mount Sinai he passes several troops of nomadic Arabs: "where under tents that they make of skins of beasts, as of camels, etc., they couch them . . . and they be right felonous and foul, and of a cursed kind."

He now travels farther afield—to India, to China; and the farther he goes, the greater are the marvels that he sees. It is as though his brain had fallen into some strange midsummer madness now that it came more and more under the influence of the tropic sun. He makes his "vaunt and his dalliance" without restraint or stint. Scarcely a sun-baked rock but a "cockodrillo" is behind it; scarcely a tree but there in its branches sits "the Popinjay which men clepe psittakes and which saluteth men as they pass through the desert." He visits Bachavia, and "in that country be many griffins more plenty than in any other country." In the island of Calonak he finds "a kind of snails that be so great, that many persons may lodge them in their shells as men would do in a little house." In the island of Tracodo he comes upon a people that "eat flesh of serpents and they eat but little. And they speak nought, but they hiss as serpents do." In Ethiopia, he assures us, "be many diverse folk, and among the rest they that have but one foot, and they go so blyve that it is marvel . . . and the foot is so large that it shadoweth all the body against the sun, when they will lie and rest them."

But it is not only such unexpected spectacles as these which catch the old man's attention. To his utter astonishment he discovers that social, religious and political systems are also variable. The inhabitants of the Isle of Lamary inform him, "that they scorn when they see any strange folk going clothed . . . for nothing is foul that is of kindly nature . . . and the women there feel definite shame and say they sin if they refuse any man." The citizens of another island declared that no state of society was in a healthy condition unless the goods of that society were held in common. Yet another people had the temerity to assert with the utmost confidence that "fornication is no deadly sin . . . and they say, there is no Purgatory and that souls shall not have neither joy ne pain."

At last, with his head made dizzy by such strange reminiscences, he returns to Europe, where it becomes necessary for him "maugre myself to rest, for gouts artetykes that me distraint that define the end of my labour; against my will (God Knoweth)."

In his "wretched rest" he solaces himself by writing (or were it best to say compiling?) his great work, which concludes with the touching plea that all who read or hear of it should offer to Almighty God a prayer for his soul.

May this perhaps be taken as a proof that, at the last, the old man's heart actually misgave him in that on certain occasions he had wittingly offended against so awful and uncompromising a Goddess as Truth herself. Alas! had he but known it, his pathetic "*Priez pour moi*" on that score was unrequired, seeing that the treacherous jade whose wrath he feared hath had herself, time out of mind, two faces and a double tongue.

LLEWELYN POWYS.

NOCTURNE AT THE SPRINGS.

WHEN I arrived at the Springs, the milky-green water of the pool was greying with twilight. The blackness that had already flooded the surrounding forest of cypress was spilling on to a pale, glassy surface ragged at the edges with umber, but still wanly alight at the centre where it stirred softly with sulphurous water welling from a subterranean source. The new foliage of the topmost branches of the western wall of cypress rose out of deep gloom into a feathery silhouette against the dying light, a crest of dark spray on an overwhelming wave of night. Beneath, in the darkness, the croaking and wailing of insects, birds and beasts had not yet blended into the hubbub of nightfall. It was still possible to distinguish in the rising tumult the call of whippoorwills,

screeches of owls, the falsetto of tree-toads, grunting of frogs and the distant, giant barking of alligators. How clearly and sweetly, like a clean tributary entering a muddy river, came flowing into this lewd din of the sub-tropical forest the first notes of the band, rehearsing in the dance-pavilion some melancholy, sentimental air—some Southern version of the American wood-note with a touch of humour in its crazy tempo and startling changes. From that direction, too, came frequent flashes of white light that shot into the Gothic obscurity of the cypress swamp; revealing for an instant the vine-draped, heavy-footed columns. The soft guttural of arriving motors died with each flare, and the laughter and shouting of boys and girls began to echo under the broad roof of the pavilion.

When I paid down my "four bits" at the entrance to the dance-hall, I was dazzled first by the harsh light of electric globes, and then by the blaze of intense colour along the benches and railings that enclosed the dance-floor. The place was thronged with youth and vivid with the brightest hues that youth could find to rival the garish spring season of this southernmost part of the United States. Scarlet, orange and sky-blue were the favoured colours in the brilliant rows along the narrow promenade; but here a fairy-like, immature little body made a bright variation with Indian red, her chattering mouth a tiny, dancing flame of carmine; and there a pair of sullen eyes of negroid cast smouldered above vermilion lips, their furtive glances taking in the effect of the dancing frock of black chiffon, the scarlet sandals and stockings. When the gown was white, a broad fillet of hot colour atoned for it, and the usual high flush of rouge was heightened to a hectic spot beneath eyes bright with belladonna and anticipation of the dance. All these gaudy flowers were as heavily steeped in artificial fragrance as in colour, refusing to be outdone by the suffocating sweetness of night-blooming jasmine or orange groves in full bloom. As I made my way along the promenade, the air seemed almost visibly and palpably saturated with perfume.

Eagerness for the first number shone in all faces, showed in quickened gesture and in an acceleration of the customary drawling speech. Even the indolent and assured grace of the young men and boys was ruffled with impatience for the premonitory rattle of the snare-drum, the first wild ululation of the saxophones. Their long, slim feet drummed the highly polished floor; their lithe bodies, clad in tightly fitting jackets and trousers, shifted and twisted with stifled agitation; their sleek heads kept turning from partner to bandsmen. Finally their surcharged excitement exploded; a red-haired youth above the hum of a hundred mellow voices implored the band-leader: "Oh, Georgie, let's go!" The band-master grinned, took in appreciatively the lovely, eager face that peered past the red-haired fellow's shoulder, winked and shouted back: "Sittin' pretty to-night, ain't you Robert, All right, Sugar! I'll give you somethin' new I got in Tampa yesterday. Let's go!" He nodded to the bored drummer whose sticks hung loosely in his limp, pale hands, and put the mouthpiece of his bull-saxophone to his full lips. The dancers stirred and arose from bench and railing like a flock of startled birds—a medley of blackbirds, bluejays, tanagers, orioles, cardinals—and before the twentieth beat of the music were crowding the floor to its barriers.

As they swept by me, each couple seemed to be improvising an extravagant burlesque of the modern dance. One couple waved their dark heads in time—the girl's black hair tossed like the mane of a capering pony—and lifted their heels high with a defiant jerk; another pair swooped down until their knees all but grazed the floor, then leapt in the air with the swift grace of a cat

after a bird; still another long-limbed couple seemed to be engaged in a wild duet of the double-shuffle; a wide-eyed, laughing two flung themselves into a calculated stumble from which they regained balance in violent pirouetting; some moved slowly about the room with the ghastly antics of locomotor ataxia, their feet twitching and halting along the boards; others seemed to be rapidly and vigorously wiping their feet on a crawling doormat. All were closely embraced with a frank sensuality that seemed to be limited to the posture and motion of their bodies; for their faces were free from the suggested preoccupation, were gay and alert with mischievous smiles, arch glances.

The air to which they moved in perfect rhythm—as if they were controlled by a single mechanism beneath the band-stand—was the artless, tenderly sad melody that the musicians had been rehearsing a while ago. It was, I suppose, a lyric of unrequited love or of homesickness for the South, but the favourite quality of erotic melancholy wailed on in undertone, submerged in the blatantries of jazz. Again and again the dancers demanded encores of this disguised expression of the sentimental sadness so dear to youth, and when at last the band-master waved them off the floor, they carried snatches of it out into the starlight. As they strolled along over the carpet-grass beneath a grove of live oaks at the back of the pavilion, or sat on benches by the darkened pool, I could hear their low voices lingering sentimentally over the simple *motif* that the finale had disentangled from the raging jazz.

As the evening wore on towards midnight, the note of dreamy romance vanished, and the obsence monotone and tunelessness of a more primitive lyricism held sway. Just as night had invaded the cool green bowl of the springs from the surrounding dismal fastness of cypress, so the hoarse clamour of the mating birds and beasts seemed to be conquering the sentimental mood of youth in the dance pavilion. The postures and movement of the dancers became extravagantly indecent. The elf in Indian red seemed to have swooned on the mountainous body of her blacksmith partner. Her thin, graceful, childlike arms were flung about the huge fellow's ruddy neck and only the very tips of her tiny feet occasionally touched the floor as her gross support moved about with stately ease. His face wore a sleepy and lecherous expression, as if it had been at once lulled and incited by the orgiastic, tomtom throb of the drums, by the insistent whimpering and screaming of the saxophones, by the heavy bass roar that the accompanist at the piano tore from the keys as he leapt upon them with crouching shoulders. The sweetish odour of moonshine exhaled from the stags along the railing, and the sheriff and his deputy slouched even lower against a disused bar; they eyed the corybantic scene with an ostentatious air of ennui which showed that they were becoming alert and anxious. Once they raised their backs simultaneously from the tarnished bar, and the three bloods who were about to come to blows over a girl in scarlet, observing this slight change of position, settled their disagreement without violence.

The hands of the clock above the bar were at right angles and closing upon midnight, when the red-haired youth again implored the band-master: "Oh, Georgie Boy! Give us those Caloosahatchee Blues for a strong finish." Wild shouts seconded his suggestion, the sleepy drummer brightened, the band-master grinned triumphantly: "Some tune, aint it, Honey? All right, Boys and Girls, for the very last time this evening and to be followed by 'Home Sweet Home'—for the very last time, Children, those terrible Caloosahatchee Blues, rendered by Clive Davis and his renowned jazz artists of Osceola Springs. Let's go!"

Ten minutes later, as the dancers clambered into their

cars, whistling and humming the simple *motif* of their song of the South, the new moon rose above the sombre wall of cypress. Its silver blade broke in the softly boiling water of the pool, and above the deep, bawdy chanting of the forest a mocking bird trilled his sweet and comic interpretation of the Florida nocturne.

EDWARD TOWNSEND BOOTH.

ART.

THE INDEPENDENTS.

WHEN the Society of Independent Artists opened its seventh annual exhibition in New York recently, it was no longer the only organization of its kind; for the "no jury" system had been adopted by other groups, and in the past year no less than four new exhibitions, in as many cities, had been opened to all persons desirous of showing their productions. The practical result of the principle which has been followed by the Independents is well-known: beside the work of seasoned professionals are hung the ineptitudes of raw students, and much nondescript rubbish; but with these there has never failed to appear a certain number of genuine and valuable works of art. The exhibition is the largest, the most entertaining, the most useful and the most anomalous to be seen on this side of the Atlantic. In its disregard of all standards, it is a confession that we, to-day, no longer have confidence in our ability to judge the work of contemporary artists. We do well to confess this; for during the last hundred years not a single painter of the first rank has appeared who has not had to force recognition from a hostile or—what is worse—an indifferent public, one composed of artists as well as laymen. The statement of Mr. Ernest Newman, quoted in these pages a short time ago, will not apply to painting, even if in music or literature it may be true that what antagonizes the public is not new quality but bad quality. Were this true, one would find the derisive or indifferent reception of a master to be the exception, as it was in the past, whereas in the nineteenth century it was the unbroken rule. Since 1884, there have been "no jury" exhibitions in France; and it has been in such exhibitions that all the good art of Paris has had its first showing during the past thirty-nine years.

No one would claim, of course, that the open forum provided by the Independents has produced the great painters of recent times; neither has it produced the people who imagine themselves great because, "like Manet and Cézanne," they have had pictures rejected by a jury. The anomaly of which these exhibitions are a symptom, is that of a period in which innumerable persons devoid of aptitude for the arts have been led into them through a longing for beauty that in other times would have found its expression in the crafts; a period in which the "official" *salon* and the dealer's gallery have expressed the taste of the enfranchised mob. Such a condition is different indeed from those of the past, when judgment was entrusted to men who had acquired competence through the combined effects of environment and training. The modern anomaly is not to be escaped by turning backward, for that is impossible. Up to the present there seems to have been no better plan devised for the establishment of a new order of art-criticism than that of letting every one who will, submit his work for the approval or disapproval of the whole public. In the end, the result can not but be healthier than that of the old regime which, when it produced a La Fontaine, forced him to write what seems to us a grovelling poem of dedication to the prince whose bread he ate.

It is, therefore, a disservice to the evolution of American art to dwell, as most of the critics have done, on the dull things in this exhibition. Nowhere does one find dull things in smaller proportion; and the egregiously bad things are usually amusing at least, whereas the dead mediocrity of the academies is merely depressing. No exhibition is dull that brings new talent to light; and from the very beginning, no Independent exhibition has failed to do this. Last year there was the case of a girl in a Texan school, whose skill in wood-carving had been discovered by her teacher; the group of figures sent to the Independents by Texie Myers were among the most delightful things seen during the year, and the works sent in by the same artist this season served to confirm that first impression. In not a few such cases, the appearance of an artist's work at the Independents has immediately been followed by an invitation to the dealers' galleries, the museums, or to exhibitions abroad. It is but natural that these should seek their material at the no-jury show when, as this year, it brings forward an artist of the type of Willem van Vliet. This young workman, living in a small town in Maine, wrote to the Dutch consul in New York to ask if there were no place where he could show his sculpture, which had been sent to the several exhibitions that he knew of and had been refused each time. The consul communicated with an official of the Metropolitan Museum, who advised that it be sent to the Independents. At the last moment, a group called "Mother and Child" arrived at the improvised galleries in the Waldorf-Astoria; and opinion was practically unanimous that it was the best piece of sculpture by an unknown artist that has come before the public in a number of years. Almost naïve in the faithfulness with which it copies its models, it yet possesses an excellence of workmanship, a thoroughness of understanding of the past (especially of late Gothic sculpture), that makes its rejection by juries almost incomprehensible save on the aforementioned theory that a new personality or a new idea is what really antagonizes the mass of men.

It often happens that in some isolated studio, research-work is being done that it would be profitable for all of us to see. One of these studios is on a Michigan farm to which Manierre Dawson, formerly a well-known architect of Chicago, has retired in order to have leisure to work out certain problems of art which have come to mean more to him than anything else. Another studio far from the Eastern centres is that of Lucien Labaudt of San Francisco; his work, shown for the first time at the Independents, has many fine and original qualities. But the exhibition is not for newcomers alone, and one always welcomes the sincerity of a better-known artist such as Joseph Lauber, who is not afraid to risk the reputation gained from doing important decorative work in our public buildings and who, like the rest, hangs his pictures between whatever works the accident of the alphabet assigns to him as neighbours. Among other men of high standing, one may mention Theodore Earl Butler, who sent from France the best picture we have seen by him in many a year; also William J. Glackens, Robert Henri and John Sloan, men who have done so much to create a healthier art-atmosphere in America; and Carl Newman and Alfred H. Maurer, who exemplify Bernard Shaw's dictum to the effect that if, in lesser natures, the mood of revolution passes with youth, in the most distinguished persons it increases with the passing of the years.

The development of modernism (if such a thing exists); the effect of the West on Japanese artists

(represented by the excellent picture of Mr. Shimizu, the cubism of Mr. Gado, the sculpture of Mr. Hiramoto and other works); the poverty of decorative art; the psychology of the child in art, and other interesting themes; all these find ample exemplification on the walls of the Independents' exhibition. The special feature of this year's exhibition, however, was the remarkable group of Mexican artists who were the guests of the Society. The admirable cultural life of these people across the border is very little known in the United States; and while it may be remembered that Mexican musical organizations have won prizes at international competitions held in this country, and our reviewers have sometimes noticed the work of Mexican writers, I can remember no previous showing of Mexican painting in our exhibitions.

The collection displayed here showed a very high level of talent, and it was conspicuously characteristic of its country in that it contained the various elements that go to make up the Mexican national life. To be sure, these elements are not in the exact proportion of the Indian and European elements in the blood of Mexico. If the European characteristics seem at first to predominate to the point of producing an art that presents no marked superficial difference from that of other countries, one has only to look a little more closely to perceive qualities that belong to Mexico alone. The remarkable wood-carving of Señor Pintao, for example, is Mexican of the purest type, continuing in vital fashion the style introduced soon after the Conquest by the Spanish church-artists and at once profoundly modified by the native sculptors—men who brought the instinct derived from a plastic art thousands of years old to the Christian symbols they were employed to execute.

In a more subtle fashion the old genius of the land appears in the fiercely expressive illustrations of Señor Orozco, and was doubtless part of the secret of the power he wielded in his years as a political cartoonist. The lighter side of Mexican art is reflected in the work of the artists of the people, who are seen at first hand—even if in their first youth—in the delightful drawings by children of the public schools, whose company their elders accept without the least sense of condescension. Indeed, nowhere else is children's work so thoroughly appreciated as in Mexico; nowhere else are the ideas of the young allowed such freedom of development; and I believe the results observable in students as they advance in years quite confirm the wisdom of this attitude. I should like to speak more at length of the work of Señor Charlot, Señor Alfaro, Señor Cano and Señor Amero, but I must hasten on to the work of Señor Rivera, which in spite of the immense knowledge behind it is still, in the directness of its vision, reminiscent of the work of the Mexican children. In this work one might review the whole course of modern art, for the artist has taken conscientious notice of one after another of its successive phases, and has had a notable place in its development. His genuinely beautiful art is, indeed, a synthesis of this development, and should be enough in itself to allay the talk about modern decadence. There is always decadence in the world, there is always growth; one sees one or the other according to the direction in which one is looking.

The importance of the Independent show, from an American point of view, lies in the evidence it presents that some of our own artists have reached a sufficient degree of excellence in original work to indicate that they are a legitimate part of the movement of growth for which one looks so eagerly amidst the desolation

of these post-war years. Starting with a man who has for nearly two decades been before the public, it is heartening to find a painter like Homer Boss making as long a forward stride as is marked by his two pictures of this year. The anatomist who continues the remarkable tradition of Eakins and Anshutz is seen as clearly in the painting of boats—their lines playing together like moving muscles and giving the whole picture a unity like that of a human body—as in the "Portrait," a work which also shows a beautiful colour-quality.

The title of Morris Kantor's big canvas, "What do I seek?" suggests expressionism, that form of literary painting into which the Germans converted what they had learned from the French moderns. The picture, however, does not bear out the suggestion. Basing his composition upon a strong sentiment of the mystery of existence, the artist has built up an architecture of form and of chiaroscuro quite along the lines of the earlier cubists, those searchers for classical structure informed by a living idea. Mr. Kantor's work is a worthy continuation of theirs, most of all because the genuineness of his feeling brings about a true originality of design.

In reviewing more than one exhibition I have found myself reserving the work of Mr. Baylinson for a final word of admiration. In his "Interior with Figures" there was not only the firmness of drawing that we have seen in this artist's work of former years, but a delicate mellowing of the somewhat severe colour of his previous work. His art is a grave one, but its gravity only enhances the charm that is coming into it. Despite the fact that his pictures hung in the place assigned them by alphabetical arrangement, their quality was quite evident to anyone prepared to appreciate it and willing to make the effort demanded by every exhibition—that of looking at all the works exhibited, not merely at those holding the places of honour. The Independent exhibition is not based on any abstract principle of fairness, still less of democracy: it simply gives freedom of judgment to the public while giving the artist a chance to see his work in its relation to the collective effort of his fellow-artists.

WALTER PACH.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS.

THE NEW ART OF COLOUR.

SIRS: The space of a letter does not in any measure permit of an adequate discussion of the recent article in the *Freeman* by Mr. Willard Huntington Wright on "A New Art of Colour," or of Dr. Arpad Gerster's reply. However, in the hope of starting a discussion of this important subject of colour either in the *Freeman* or elsewhere, a subject which seems to me to be completely misunderstood in both of these articles, permit me to make a few comments.

Dr. Gerster's reply to Mr. Wright seems to me a particularly unfair attack upon all contemporary painting existing outside the sacrosanct precincts of the "academy," and a rather futile attempt to construct by a quasi-scientific, quasi-moralistic argument, an æsthetic theory of "higher" and "lower" sense-perceptions. Dr. Gerster's method of attack upon contemporary plastic experimentation, is to lump all this work, so diverse in character and intention, under the label "modernism," and to describe it without the slightest particularization as "the fervent cult of pathologic decay," "the presentation of grotesque ugliness, the childish veneration of eccentricity *qua* eccentricity" etc. etc.

Permit me to point out one typical example of fallacious thinking in the other phase of Dr. Gerster's article. He divides visual perception as follows: "The lower one of these elements is the perception of colour, a purely sensual, direct, and almost unreflective act. . . . The higher one of

the two elements . . . consists in the ability to appreciate outline, design and plastic contour." Setting aside as unworthy of discussion either in art or any other manifestation of life, the moral slant, the attempt to impose upon the innocence of the senses the mediæval Christian concept implied in his use of the terms, "higher" *v.* "lower," "sensual" *v.* "intellectual," this should be clear: that the perception of "outline, design and plastic contour" is only a quasi-visual one and is derived directly from the experiences of the sense of touch; a sense which Dr. Gerster asserts, is the "lowest" of all. For it is obvious that a child can have no real experience of the meaning of round and square until it has actually touched objects so shaped, as it begins to do as soon as it comes into the world. Thus it is precisely from memories of touch, functioning through the sense of vision, that "the highest forms of art-manifestation" have come. The apprehension of sculptural form, which Mr. Wright correctly says has been the fundamental basis of painting up to the present, is unexpressed touch.

On the other hand, the perception of colour is a purely visual experience. One can not apprehend colour through smell, hearing or touch. It is unrelated to the other senses except by association, and more particularly to touch in this: that colour entirely divorced from form or shape does not and can not exist either in nature or in art. Even the sky is shaped by the horizon-line or by the ocular limits of the human eye, and colour put upon canvas or projected as light upon a screen would be equally delimited. Mr. Wright is much too intelligent not to know that colour without form is neither possible nor æsthetically expressive. Thus when Dr. Gerster denies the possibility of potent colour, although it is the product of the sense which he calls the "highest," and at the same time gives exclusive significance to "outline, design and plastic contour," there is a real *reductio ad absurdum*. Through his false analysis of visual perception, upon which he attempts to build his whole thesis against Mr. Wright, he has really proved, and not disproved, part of Mr. Wright's case. For if colour has not been an important and potent element in the painting of the past, it may well be because the "higher" or as I prefer, the less primitive senses, are the last to achieve perceptions which cease to be "unreflective acts" and become æsthetically significant. This may be observed in the case of the sense of hearing, as the supreme achievements of music are far younger than painting or sculpture.

Dr. Gerster certainly has not answered Mr. Wright. The substance of Mr. Wright's essay is this: In the development of painting, colour has not been a profound element. With this both Dr. Gerster and I agree. Mr. Wright asserts that painting and sculpture reached their ultimate development in Rubens and Michelangelo, that the medium of paint is incapable of revealing æsthetically significant colour and that the future of colour lies in the colour-organ. Dr. Gerster denies the æsthetic possibilities of all colour. With the deductions of both of these gentlemen I disagree because in my opinion, while Mr. Wright and Dr. Gerster have been theorizing, æsthetically meaningful colour, which dominates and yet combines with "outline, design and plastic contour," without destroying them, has been achieved in much of the painting of Georgia O'Keefe, recently exhibited at the Anderson Galleries. This work appears to me to be a distinct qualification of their theories and generalizations. The colour is not local, is not merely a decoration of sculptural form; nor is it arbitrarily fixed by colour-scales, as in synchromism. On the other hand it did have for many that intensity through itself which Mr. Wright demands for colour, which he denies to the medium of paint, and which Dr. Gerster denies can exist in any form. I am, etc.,
New York City.

PAUL STRAND.

A CHALLENGE UNANSWERED.

SIRS: The challenge issued to supporters of the League of Nations in your issue of 4 April, on questions raised by Principal Jacks in his article in the *Atlantic Monthly*, met with sudden recognition from the *New York World*; but instead of replying to the particular questions raised by Mr. Jacks and yourselves, the editors of the *World* have done nothing more than show a lamentable loss of temper.

The complaint made in your article against supporters of the League is of course perfectly justifiable. The *World* presumably holds the idea of a league as one of its pet theories, but is not entirely satisfied with the make-up and practice of the present League. Nevertheless it supports this body because it "carries this form of co-operation [i.e. co-operation of non-political organizations] further than it has ever been carried." That is, the *World* supports the present League, which functions without the co-operation of Russia, Germany, and the United States, to mention only a few of the Powers not represented; a League which represents in actuality no form of co-operation save co-operation by certain Governments in policies economic, naval, and military, which are inimical to the interests of their peoples. Blessed word, co-operation; more blessed, indeed, when it embraces subsidiary questions such as labour, health and science!

The *World* says further, "we are the last to claim that this form of co-operation is completed or that in its present form it has not great defects." This confession places the *World* in an unevitable light; for it is the form and the great defects of the League of Nations that you and Principal Jacks dislike. Is it too much to expect the *World* to be informed concerning what has taken place since the ostensible supporters of the League made peace and brought nothing but disaster to Europe? Perhaps it is not tactful to suggest that the editors of the *World* should read the news-columns published in that paper; but in those columns there has been published during the past three years quite sufficient information on the questions that the League was supposedly formed to deal with, to make a heretic of a one-hundred-per-cent leaguer, if such a person exists. Consider the disputes which have arisen among the late Allies, disputes which have had fearful consequences. There is not one of these that I know of which has received the consideration of the "European mind." Chauvinistic nationalism, secret diplomacy, military strategy, and monopolistic aggrandizement have been the guiding impulses of their decisions. Principal Jacks goes to the root of the matter when he says: "Can we wonder any longer that, since the creation of the League, the Great Powers which made themselves its dominating members, have shown not the least disposition to submit disputes *among themselves* (which have been serious in the meantime) to its jurisdiction? What else could be expected when the chief offenders are themselves judges of the cause?" The *World* does not reply to this, presumably because Principal Jacks is a "well meaning person" and "a pretty good literary stylist," but is "seduced by phrases, ignorant of the facts and destitute of political sense." Is it any wonder that intelligent Europeans can scarcely repress a smile when the qualifications of the editorial writers of our daily papers are discussed?

The *World* has succeeded in this editorial in depriving the most sanguine supporters of the League of all hope in those vital projects which we were told it would specifically deal with. The *World's* editorial holds out no hope for disarmament, the abolition of secret diplomacy, the self-determination of small nations, and the solution of those terrible problems which follow in the wake of nationalistic ambition.

The crux of the problem seems to lie in this: that you and Principal Jacks would reform the League altogether and the *World* would complete, in some way not yet made clear, this body which is utterly undemocratic, is removed entirely from the control or even the influence of public opinion, and is the most powerful instrument yet invented for maintaining the old, evil system of the balance of power. Moreover, the *World* can see nothing but a league under the dominance of Governments. It can not imagine a league without government. Yet it says, "when they [Principal Jacks and the *Freeman*] go further and argue that a league of Governments is a positive evil, our reply is that for the purposes of keeping the peace it is the Governments which have to be civilized." Exactly; and that is the very reason why no hope of any positive good can be placed in a League of Nations dominated by Governments representing the economic system which maintains in Europe.

The *World* says further, "for government will continue on this earth whether there is capitalism, communism, or

the Single Tax." It is only natural that devoted adherents of the League of Nations should believe that government is necessary, not this Government or that Government or t'other Government, but government—the prod-you-in-the ribs kind of government. It is also quite natural that the liberal supporters of the League of Nations should deepen their faith in the brass-button brigade. These things are natural, editorially, because during the period of the European war, most intelligent persons noticed that government, just government, had made a magnificent fizzle of world-affairs; and that its spokesmen, in defining war-aims for public consumption, lied in their haste, and later set up the most colossal system of robbery in their leisure. Obviously Governments are a failure; something else should be tried; so the *World* quite naturally puts its faith in a league of Governments. Now I take it that Principal Jacks and the *Freeman* don't like "Governments which have to be civilized," and see little to be gained by concentrating in a super-Government the barbarity of uncivilized Governments. I take it that you believe a less dangerous system can be formed by the people if only the people can get the chance. For, after all, one must hold to one's faith in the people, no matter what may be said of their attempts at making governments; and though the editors of the *World* may be quite ignorant of the signs of the times, abundant manifestations come from all parts of the world indicating that people are sick to death of attempting to civilize their political masters and that they are pretty nearly ready for a drastic change. I am, etc.,

Chicago.

RICHARD CLAUGHTON.

BOOKS.

THREE WOMEN NOVELISTS.

IN the whole range of literary history there have been but few women writers; and, of these few, still fewer have given expression to that something which differentiates a woman's mind, emotion, and temperament from a man's. Now of all the novels recently written by women, Rebecca West's "The Judge"¹ is the only one which is really a woman's book. The others, laying aside certain femininities, or certain feminine mannerisms or puerilities, might just as well have been written by men. In nearly every one of its essentials, Rebecca West's book could never have been the work of a man; and this amazingly distinguished quality it shares with the books of the half-dozen women writers whose work, no matter how long ago it was produced, perpetually gives a new thrill to readers. Women writers commonly write in one of three manners: they either write exactly like men, as George Eliot has done, in which case they are frequently dull and stodgy; or they write as men expect them to write, which accounts for a great deal of the mushy love-poetry and mother-poetry; or, rarest of all—like Emily Brontë, George Sand, Jane Austen, Madame de Staël, Sappho, and the unknown women singers of "The Love Songs of Connacht," whose influence no modern Irish writer has escaped—they give a genuine expression of themselves. The quality which is their own is one that can make them the peer of the greatest men artists without being at all like them. We know that Sappho was the peer of Catullus—probably the only poet whom Catullus himself would have regarded as his equal—yet unnumbered atoms separate them in kind. Emily Brontë is the peer of the Abbé Prevost, and the passion of Catherine and Heathcliff is, in its intensity, equal to that of Manon and des Grieux, though it is completely different in kind. Yet the quality which differentiates "Manon Lescaut" from "Wuthering Heights" has nothing whatever to do with what is commonly called virility or femininity; as a matter of fact, Emily

¹ "The Judge." Rebecca West. New York: George H. Doran Co \$2.50.

Brontë's book is by far the more virile in the common understanding of that word. But think of any scene in Prevost's book in which is expressed des Grieux's love for Manon, think of any expression of love in the whole range of literature, and compare it with Catherine's expression of her love for Heathcliff in "Wuthering Heights," and that single comparison will be more illuminating than a hundred treatises in sex-psychology:

Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire. . . . My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff's miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning: my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished and *he* remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger. . . . He's always, always in my mind: not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself, but as my own being.

Now to take as exhibits the books of three of the most important women writers who have published novels within the last few months: Miss Willa Cather in "One of Ours,"¹ writes like a man and succeeds in being dull; Miss May Sinclair in "Anne Severn and the Fieldings,"² is feminine and charming, and a little puerile, not to say infantile; and Miss Rebecca West in "The Judge" gives a genuine expression of a woman's mind, and this although the book is not a very successful book. "The Judge" has met with unfavourable criticism from many different sorts of critics, from Middleton Murry to William McFee; and, with some reservations, the critical reader can agree with a great deal that has been said against it. It is easy to see why the book would be displeasing to a critic like Middleton Murry; Miss West, although she probably is not aware of it, is a romantic novelist, and Mr. Murry's affections in literature are not deeply with the romantics. To the cursory reader the book will deliver up little except its numerous faults, its heavy, elephantine movement, its frequent absurdities, its interminable descriptions of scenery—descriptions that call to mind Oscar Wilde's frequent gibes at the Scots mania for describing scenery. Miss West, I believe, is Scots.

However, there is no reader but will be repaid by a careful perusal of "The Judge," for it reveals a richness of mind, a spaciousness of sympathy and understanding, an intensity in love and hatred which give a deep life even to the characters in the book that are most ungainly in their conception—and they are all ungainly except the characters of Richard Yaverland and his mother. It is in many ways the last sort of book that one would look for from a woman who is a distinguished critic: the form is not really suited to the content; there is nothing finished or accomplished about the structure, which is in fact rather unworkmanlike; the author has the bad journalistic habit of commenting on things and people rather than revealing them; there are faults hard to reconcile with the work of anybody having a sound scholarship in literature—not that scholarship in literature is a necessity for a novelist, but it helps one to avoid many sorts of mistakes, and in the case of Miss West it ought to have put her in possession of a more suitable form for her novel. The lengthy descriptions of scenery in "The Judge" remind us of nothing so much as those monstrous *études de la nature* common in old-

fashioned French novels that are a hangover from the romantic period. Miss West seems to have gone round England and Scotland with a notebook, and then to have emptied its contents into her novel. She sends her lovers for a walk as an excuse for describing the Pentlands; she makes her hero visualize his first going to sea merely, it would seem, to give us a long description of the Thames. She does this sort of thing so frequently that it is hard to believe that her mind was always thoroughly in the grip of her character or her situation. The first part, that dealing with the Scots girl, Ellen Melville, and her mother, is the only section of the book in which Miss West's realism is authentic. In these early pages Ellen is indeed real, and through her Miss West gives a remarkable revelation of a girl's mind and spirit. She is of historic interest, for she enables one to understand the emotions and enthusiasms behind the women's movement in England before the war. The older women rationalized the movement as an effort to win votes, but for the younger women it was an outlet for adventurous and independent minds that were resolved to make "life as fine as the story-books say." Few people have been in the way of knowing this young women's movement as well as Miss West, for it was in their organ, the *Freewoman*, that her first surprising articles appeared. In the remainder of the book, or rather in the last three-quarters, Miss West is a romantic novelist struggling to make realistic an unrealistic plot and intensely romantic emotions.

The two chief characters, Richard Yaverland and his mother, reach at times the dimensions of characters in a saga, for Miss West can fly high though she rarely remains long on the wing. "The Judge" is the story of a man's relation to two women, his sweetheart, Ellen, and his mother, Marion Yaverland, whose illegitimate son he is. He loves his mother so much that in her presence he can forget the existence of his sweetheart. The squire, his father, was away with a prince on a voyage round the world when he was born, and Marion's relatives intimidate her into making an honest woman of herself by marrying the squire's butler, Peacey, who promises that the marriage will be a nominal one. Peacey breaks his word in a scene that would have a genuine saga-like awfulness but for Miss West's half-hearted attempt at realism. Richard's mother is a woman out of a herotale or a legend. When she recognizes that love between her son and his betrothed can be only an indifferent affair as long as she lives, she rids them of her disturbing presence in a way that she thinks will look accidental. The ramifications of the plot—and "The Judge" has many ramifications—and the intensity of the situations can not be suggested through an outline of the story.

With its original plot and these saga-like figures, "The Judge" could have been made into a splendid romantic novel if it had been told with the restrained magnificence of a saga. But Miss West has almost no restraint, and the intensity of her conception is blurred by her meandering and pointless descriptions in which her romantic power runs to seed.

With all its faults—and these are almost incredible—"The Judge" is a distinguished book, and the profundity of the life it reveals is in strong contrast to the slight texture of life that May Sinclair gives us in "Anne Severn and the Fieldings." There has always been something imitative about Miss Sinclair, and in the last few years she has been making a determined effort to keep up with the latest literary manifestations. Nearly every one of her recent books reveals some

¹ "One of Ours." Willa Cather. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

² "Anne Severn and the Fieldings." May Sinclair. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$2.50.

fashion of the day; she shamelessly imitated Dorothy Richardson in a very good book, and undoubtedly added a great deal to what she borrowed. "Anne Severn and the Fieldings" is quite expertly written and entertaining, though one would hardly cross the street to meet any of the people in it. Miss Sinclair is an able and distinguished writer who has recently been overworking her imagination and drawing too much on what seem to have been not too profound experiences—in short, she has recently been turning out too many books. Turning out a great many books, be it understood, is no sign of weakness in a writer; some of the very greatest writers have been the most voluminous in their output, but they have also been voluminous in their minds and their experiences, which Miss Sinclair apparently is not. If she had rolled her last few books into one, her reputation, if not her sales, would have been higher; but she has squeezed everything out too thin—her emotions, her characters, her vocabulary. Her style, which in the best of her books attains a charming simplicity, drops to a kind of childish prattle-prattle. The story is about Anne Severn and her relations with the Fieldings, most of whom seem to have been in love with Anne. She, in turn, is in love with Jerrold, who, being misled about Anne by his mother, and not being sure of his own mind anyway, marries Maisie. He goes to the war, comes back and finds himself in love with Anne who in due course becomes his mistress. Jerrold is later released to marry Anne by the noble-minded Maisie. In the course of describing their love-affair, Miss Sinclair undertakes to give a realistic account of the relations between them. There are at present a large number of readers who decline to think anybody an important writer who has not the desire and capability to give a representational account of sex-relations. Miss Sinclair has not much capability in the eretical when compared with experts like Lawrence and Joyce, not to speak of Americans like Waldo Frank and Ben Hecht. It could not have really interested her to do it, and it adds nothing to her story.

After reading "One of Ours," with its slow recording of life on a Western farm, one feels inclined to say with Victor Morse the ace, who occupies a few pages in the portion of the book that deals with the war, "I'd rather be a stevedore in the London docks than a banker-king in one of your prairie States. . . . My God, it's death in life! What's left of men if you take all the fire out of them? They're afraid of everything." In this book Miss Cather chronicles the life of a commonplace young farmer called Claude Wheeler, who rather conventionally finds his soul in the war. No doubt it is all a very accurate account of life in the North-western States, but an accurate account of any life is rarely of interest. The mere chronicle of the life of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, might not be of any more interest than the memoirs of the Crown Prince of Germany; Shakespeare made his prince a figure of immortal romance and tragedy by endowing him with a life out of his own spirit. If Miss Cather can not give the Western farmers some strong life and emotion out of herself, writing about them in this arduous way will add little to life or literature. How poor in emotion, in experience, in love of living her farmers are may be seen if one compares this book with Selma Lagerlöf's stories of farm-life in Sweden. The war removed Claude Wheeler from his dull life and gave him the opportunity to die for a cause; pitifully enough, the war gave to many people their one great emotion, and in many cases this was hate. Miss Cather seems to see

the war through some one else's mind, and her attitude towards that colossal calamity is a cross between that of a radical humanitarian clergyman and a red-blooded columnist. Calling the Germans "Huns," and referring to the hand of a dead German as a "huge paw" is no occupation for a writer of Miss Cather's distinguished gifts. The author is perhaps far more familiar with the farm-life she writes of here than with the life she wrote of in her magical book "Youth and the Bright Medusa"; but familiarity with a life is often a handicap to a writer, for great is the temptation merely to recollect and chronicle that life. Familiarity with what one writes about is of far less importance than the moralistic critics would have us believe. "The vision of the artist," said Oscar Wilde, "is far more important to us than what he looks at." After all, is not one of the most real of American plays, "The Shewing-up of Blanco Posnet," by a man who never saw an inch of American soil?

MARY M. COLUM.

MR. ROBINSON'S PROGRESS.

THE progress of Mr. Robinson's work records a consistent development from an art revealing humanity exclusively in terms of the individual to one in which humanity is revealed solely in its universal aspect, in which the casual accidents of individual experience and character have been obliterated, and the poet's concern has been with eternal, ideal types of human nature and life. This has been the secret of Mr. Robinson's journey from Tilbury Town to Camelot; from romantic art insistently concerned with the unique values of specific character, to classic art conventionalizing the pattern of life in symbolic legend. The significance of "Roman Bartholow"¹ in this progress is that it represents the journey's end. It reports his ultimate discovery of Camelot in Tilbury Town. For "Roman Bartholow" is, no less than "Merlin," a dramatic reading of life as a total career, although, unlike "Merlin," it illustrates the general fortunes of life entirely in terms of individual experience.

The narrative elements of the poem are exceedingly simple. It tells the story of Bartholow and of his wife Gabrielle who,

Serving a triple need, so fondly sought
And rarely found, of beauty, mind and fire,

is betrayed by Penn-Raven, a "resident saviour domiciled" who

. . . having found the soul
In Bartholow that ailed him, had with ease
Ineffable healed it—having wrought meanwhile
More than his indeterminate attention
Saw waiting for his pains.

These three, together with the scholar-fisherman Umfraville who plays the part of choric interpreter, constitute the dramatis personæ. The fundamental attitude of Mr. Robinson's art has always been akin to that of the Greeks in its conviction that the essential drama of life lies in the inward effect of experience upon the spirit; and so rigorously has he concentrated upon the internal world of mind and emotions that in many of his most dramatic poems the external story is never written, and the obvious incident and action are relegated to implication. Of all the external stories implied by his poems, that of "Roman Bartholow" is the most completely projected. The articulation is resolute; scene by scene the narrative proceeds with cumulative intensity to the final colloquy between Bartholow and his wife and his subsequent interview

¹ "Roman Bartholow." Edwin Arlington Robinson. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$1.75.

with Penn-Raven, a passage that for sheer dramatic power is quite unequalled by anything that Mr. Robinson has previously given us. In insight into character the poem is no less remarkable than in mastery of situation. There is in "Roman Bartholow" the insatiable probing into the hidden recesses of the human soul, the dissective analysis of heart and mind under the impact and compulsion of life to which Mr. Robinson's conception of dramatic function commits him. But, as in the case of "Merlin" and "Lancelot," the drama does not converge within the consciousness of a single character; life is not arrested in order that its effect may be determined retrospectively, but revealed in its full activity. So clearly conceived are Bartholow, Gabrielle and Penn-Raven as to make evident the inward effect of life in outward circumstance.

In the austerity of its mood and in architectural severity, "Roman Bartholow" recalls the pattern of Greek tragedy, an impression that is only reinforced by the use of an interpretative chorus in the character of Umfraville, and finally confirmed when one perceives the daring intention for which the narrative serves as a vehicle. What Mr. Robinson has done in this poem is the modern equivalent of what the Greek tragic poets did; he has taken a familiar, obvious and melodramatic fable and turned it to the service of philosophic expression. Despite the emotional power of the story and its explicit motivation in character, "Roman Bartholow" is primarily a philosophical poem, a study of the spiritual consequences of certain well-defined ways of apprehending life. It proceeds from the observation

That we are all at work on one another
Not knowing how or when, nor, as a rule,
Much caring

to the conclusion that

The way of custom is the way of death
Or may be so for some who follow it
Too far.

Bartholow's tragedy is that of having found his soul only to lose what he had most cherished:

'Our souls are foreign in us till our fears
Attest them and they clamour to be known
And owned; they are our slayers and our saviours,
And we more slain than saved.'

And Gabrielle's is the tragedy of complete negation:

... Her tragedy
Is knowing how hard it is to care so little
For all that is unknown, and heed so little
Of all that is unseen.

Out of the tangled web of their existence and defeat rises Bartholow's doom of freedom. As Penn-Raven observes after the catastrophe:

Your doom is to be free. The seed of truth
Is rooted in you, and the fruit is yours
For you to eat alone. You can not share it,
Though you may give it, and a few thereby
May taste of it, and so not wholly starve.

Bartholow is one more portrait to be added to Mr. Robinson's already extensive gallery of studies in what has been termed his doctrine of "success in failure." His counsel of self-reliance and individualism, of positive action in following one's intuitive ideals wherever they may lead even when worldly wisdom suggests the folly of such a course, implies a devotion to ideals so exclusive as to make negligible their material consequences. The doctrine of "success in failure" is merely his recognition of the discord between material experience and spiritual truth.

That the desire for final certitude about life and reality should be more characteristic of mystics than of intellectualists is one of the ironic paradoxes of human thought. There is more than a little mysticism in Mr. Robinson's transcendental philosophy, and the quest for certainty is a theme to which he often recurs in his poetry, notably in "The Children of the Night," in "The Man Against the Sky" and now in "Roman Bartholow." In this last poem it is the burden of evil and error in a complicated world, expressed in the eternal warfare between custom and nature, that has kindled his imagination. There is a certain serenity in his final reaffirmation of the validity of pure faith which comes as a new note in his art, and it is upon this note of acceptance and reconciliation that the poem closes.

The beauty and the significance of the poem derive from its capacity to move the reader profoundly in two ways. It is both a dramatic narrative of unusual emotional power and a reading of life distinguished by the intellectual subtlety and high seriousness that qualify the mood of Mr. Robinson's mind. Into it have gone the vision and insight, the striking command of expression and the spiritual integrity, which constitute Mr. Robinson's contribution to our poetry.

LLOYD MORRIS.

PRAGMATISM IN ETHICS.

CAN a man ever know what he is doing? Professor Dewey¹ maintains that "he always builds better or worse than he knows." He can take into account only a limited number of the innumerable currents that pull and twist his projects once they are launched upon the seas of actuality. The wonder is that we can perceive even obscurely what we are about, or that it is ever appropriate to hold a man responsible for the outcome of his acts. Yet because of man's ability to foresee, he is a moral being, and must to some extent shoulder the blame for his untoward deeds. Society insists that he shall, both formally in its courts of law, where he is expected to behave like a reasonable being, and informally, by its more subtle sanctions and punishments, which tend to direct his conduct into conformity with the prevailing code. The possibility of this social appraisal is a very potent incentive, compelling a man to keep his weather eye out for the likely results of his behaviour. He may suppose that he is constrained by the dictates of a still small voice, but this inner monitor is but the subjective reflection of his social sensitiveness to the imagined judgment of his peers, especially of those with whom he feels himself to be in close and telling relations.

This social verdict is not the product of any intelligent calculation of the best interests of society. The customs and standards underlying the praise and blame meted out in any particular community at any particular period, are the result of a natural but partly haphazard evolution. They consist of an odd mixture of useful strictures and innocuous or stupid conventions, instituted by chance and preserved by inertia.

Standards of virtue evolved in this way, particularly those of the ascetic type which conceive of man as a creature with a higher or spiritual nature and a lower and shameful one, have had all too little respect for the play of impulse and the drive of desire. The realm of the ideal has been separated from the springs of actual living, and this has imposed upon the individual a hopeless dilemma. If he takes the code at its face value, he may elect to live in the ideal sphere, indulging his own cloistered pieties, regarding reality as sordid and irreclaimable, and dreaming of some magic moment when the

¹ "Human Nature and Conduct." John Dewey. New York: Henry Holt and Co. \$2.25.

unaccountable blowing of the winds of the spirit shall somehow increase the number of the elect. Or he may react against it altogether and choose to live in the actual world, scorning idealism as ineffectual, but most likely turning to his own advantage its disregard of concrete conditions.

The result of all this is to discredit morality itself. It is impossible for any great number of men and women to-day to admire denatured saints or pattern their own conduct upon them. What happens, consequently, is that the majority, while paying the code lip-service, actually fumble along in a sort of compromise between the spiritual and the temporal, looking upon frailties of the flesh with a good-humoured toleration. Plays, for example, that depict a rigid and sterile goodness in contrast to an abounding and winsome humanity, always find the audience on the side of the immoral hero. An ethics too good for human nature's daily food will sooner or later breed in the more wholesome members of society a secret disgust. Moreover, what remains most effective in such a code is largely negative and suppressive. Since unnatural ideals can be inculcated only by arbitrary and drastic means, they inevitably lead to overemphasis upon blind obedience and subjection. People even come to desire a neutral and insipid respectability, in which the only fatal thing is to be conspicuous. "For one man who thanks God that he is not as other men, there are a thousand who offer thanks that they are as other men, sufficiently as others to escape attention." "Morals that professedly neglect human nature end by emphasizing those qualities in human nature that are the most commonplace and average."

Professor Dewey's moral philosophy takes sharp issue with any ethics that disparages a part of human nature and refuses to make its starting-point the man as a whole. For him, man's aspirations are not to be separated from the surge of impulse within or the actual conditions which are to effect the realization of his ideals in the world without. He starts with an analysis of the individual, the vague and restless impulses with which we are born, and follows their training (effected through contact with objects and the habits of teachers and parents) into channels where their action can bring us fuller satisfaction. The process of finding ways in which our behaviour can be made to "neutralize our cravings," without interfering too much with conflicting desires, or with similar needs on the part of others, is finished only when we die. But while this process starts under the guidance of those who bring us up, and begins with mere imitation of their habits, later on it draws increasingly upon intelligence. At this point we become ethical beings. When we begin to imagine the results of a given course, and to modify our behaviour accordingly, only then, indeed, do we become capable of morality. But intelligence itself is not something extraneous to our impulses; it has been evolved because of its utility in giving them rewarding outlets and bringing them into harmony with one another. Therefore the life that is satisfactory for our impulses is one of constant interplay between the inner and the outer world. Our very ideals are of value because of their ability to give us working schemes which enable us to act upon our environment, so that we may have a richer and more expanding life. This is an ethics which begins with human nature as it is, and which aims at its most complete functioning under the concrete conditions of this world.

There are two characteristics of Professor Dewey that lead to an understanding of his theory—his unrelenting honesty and his love of youth. The former makes him insist to the point of a rigid literalism that ideals must be given sincerity by one's life. The latter emerges in

his avidity for freshness, his pleasure in the dynamics of at constantly directed change.

The criticism is sometimes levelled against him that he is too pragmatic, that he loses his sense of standards, of any stability of truth. This is perhaps just in the light of his emphasis, the ardour of his reaction against a stiff intellectualism; but he fully realizes that the mind needs standards in order to correct standards and that it can reconsider its arbitrary categories only by forming new and more adequate ones. A more serious objection to his philosophy is that, while he values so highly the expansion of life, he does not recognize that there is any essential conflict between growth and adjustment. He treats impulses as given, fixed in degree and intensity, and therefore he is able to reduce the ethical problem to a matter of their correlation and expression. But recent psychiatry seems to show that the easy working of impulse destroys its urgency. Difficulty and bracing opposition compress and energize the forces of life. It is obstructed impulse that makes the world go round.

Professor Dewey is still too much at war with doctrinaire over-simplifications for his thought to be in any but a fluid state. This makes for a rich suggestive quality, but hardly for distinctness. His style is confused by his attempt to make all his points in every paragraph, to avoid the falsities of specialized statement. His pages are turgid; but there often flashes across them a sentence or a phrase that has been fused by the pressure of his thought into a crystal of clarity.

GERTRUDE BESSE KING.

SHORTER NOTICES.

MR. E. M. FORSTER sets a lively, imaginative pace in his novels, and maintains it. Sometimes, as in "A Room With a View,"¹ he seems to be actually engaged in outrunning his story, and one becomes more interested in his performance than in the disposition of the materials with which he has chosen to deal. In proportion as he finds himself involved with situations which give scope to his entire sprightly capacity, he becomes finely impressionistic and writes with a satisfying fund of wit and imagination. But even when he simply marks time, waiting for incidents to form in marching order, he gives the interval a certain momentum of its own. Thus he is not dependent upon his characters; and if they do not always come to life as they should (which sometimes happens), there are in his work compensations of style and verbal felicity. L. B.

JAMES E. AGATE, former dramatic reviewer for the *Manchester Guardian*, and author of a volume of essays in dramatic criticism called "Buzz! Buzz!", which, appearing in 1918, attracted much less than the attention it deserved, has now collected another sheaf of essays, mostly on acting and the drama, under the name of "Alarums and Excursions."² One of the first essays in the collection pleads for the critic as artist; and even before the author is done pleading, he has begun the justification of his plea by demonstrating what he means. His artistry contains something too much, perhaps, of preciousness in language; it smacks of obsolescence: there is repetition of phrases, the result of combining scattered essays in one volume; and the sparkle comes occasionally to mere froth. But with these faults are to be weighed acumen plus wit, if acumen be not in itself a kind of wit; sound sense, which is absent from hardly a page; an ability to quote aptly and entertainingly and freshly; and a stroke that hews clean, notably in a contrast between St. John Hankin and Stanley Houghton. If one would wish away a part—only a part—of the horsey chatter in "Cackle and 'Osses," one must wish there were more of the "Big Pugs and Little." In a moving chapter, Mr. Agate is indignant at the critics who saw only waned power in the last appearances of Bernhardt; he is Chestertonian on Chaplin; concrete and reminiscent everywhere. His bias in

¹ "A Room With a View." E. M. Forster. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

² "Alarums and Excursions." James E. Agate. New York: George H. Doran Company. \$2.00.

the dramatic essays is towards "theatrical opportunism"; temperament, not intellect, he reminds us, is the prime requisite of the actor; ratiocination can not be acted. "He is a trifle stagy," they say. Well, heaven be thanked!" he remarks. Place must be found for this book beside the dramatic opinions of Shaw, Beerbohm, Walkley, and Nathan.

R. A. P.

EX LIBRIS.

FOREIGN visitors to America, who look at our moving pictures and our popular magazines, are struck by the impersonality of almost everything we exhibit and write. Our stories for the greater part are as much cut to pattern as the latest fashion in men's collars: the old Victorian joke about Thackens and Dickeray, or whatever it was, applies with fatal precision to almost all our writers of fiction. Indeed, the interleaving of stories and advertisements is perhaps emblematic of the fact that the gentlemen who advise us to wash ourselves with water, to eat bread, and to sleep on a comfortable mattress might be exchanged with the story-writers whose humour is of a less subtle turn without anyone noting the difference. It is no breach of confidence to say that the change is often made, literature being a sort of seasonal trade which serves to fill the gap when work gets slack in other fields.

THIS is not to say that, in America, literature has become the plaything of the amateur; far from that, it has become a lucrative sideline for those who specialize in staple commodities; and here perhaps more than anywhere else we can see how the absence of æsthetic standards has made us adopt an attitude towards literature which would justify Mr. H. L. Mencken's most vehement strictures on the "booboisie." In Mr. Mencken's amusing translation of the Declaration of Independence one finds the statement that—*pace* Jefferson!—"every man is as good as the next one, and a damn sight better." This was the popular attitude towards literature even before the rise of the old ten-cent magazine; and it was summed up beautifully a little while ago by the *Illustrated News* when it said, apropos of a widely advertised "scenario-contest," that the result "proves beyond all doubt that the American public can supply its own art-industry, 'the movies,' with plenty of impressive plots drawn from real life." Was it not sheer modesty on the part of the *News* to confine the American public's contribution to the movies? The truth of the matter is that almost all our literature and art is produced by the public, by people, that is to say, whose education, whose mental bias, whose intellectual discipline does not differ by so much as the contents of a spelling-book from the great body of readers who enjoy their work.

OUR literary class in America is to-day alas! only a handful when compared to the legions that compose our literate class; and it is from the merely literate that the greater part of our intellectual nutriment comes. It is quite understandable, this itch to try one's hand at writing; and since there is fun in being able to express oneself on paper, the interest in the literary arts that so many people exhibit might be a healthy and encouraging sign, were it not for the outlets that are offered. It does not require any great knowledge of classic forms to write a good letter; a little humour and imagination will go a long way; and it would be delightful to think that a large number of vivacious amateurs were following for their own pleasure the path that Samuel Richardson took to the abode of Pamela. For correspondence and private jottings one's daily experience is perhaps a sufficient guide; and the more people who seasoned their lives with the salt that went into Defoe, the merrier, and the wider spread would be our interest in formal letters.

It would not be so bad if the work of our illiterati had the charm and simplicity of pure ignorance; if it were as divinely untutored as an Italian primitive, or as fresh as the poems which a child of ten, like Hilda Conkling, will occasionally write. Unfortunately, the contrary is the case. There are no end of bad examples in contemporary literature upon which present-day aspirants intently model their work; and so we have, as a result of the popular ignorance of other cultures, the debauchery of third-rate talents by fifth-rate models. Such acquaintance with literature as our writers have only makes them a more easy prey to their environment: they learn to write stories with a business motive for this magazine, stories with a feminine motive for that, and so on; and finally, nothing less than a "national circulation" and a "national trademark" seems to them worth striving for.

Now, it does not matter much whether a writer is a novelist, a playwright or an essayist, his business is to release us from the "dreary intercourse of daily life" and carry us over into a world where the imagination works vigorously, where truths are not choked by customs or vested interests, where all that is petty and insufficient in our dreams, our actions, and our ideas is rounded out into a conclusive whole. The people in our stories, for example, must not be merely moving images in a smudged mirror; the writer is bound to reveal in them the inherent possibilities of the tragic or the beautiful or the demonic; for if he presents only what is in the mirror—what the passer-by sees with a glance—he does not show what blind men see. The inner world that the artist penetrates can be opened up only by a deliberate act of dissociation; and this, one of the essential tasks of the writer, is almost impossible as long as Gopher Prairie and Spoon River are the only places that the writer is acquainted with, and as long as the popular magazine, the newspaper, and an occasional contemporary novel are his only models.

IN order to see clearly an institution or a situation or a mode of life, one must have some external standard of comparison: otherwise a person born in a community of lepers would think that a livid rottenness characterized the human race. Almost everybody has had the experience of seeing the members of his household and the very furniture of his rooms in a new and striking light when they came under the inspection of some visitor whose habits and experience of things were different from his own. It is the same in literature. When we know what the people of Greece or Italy or France have found interesting in life, when we enter into their conceptions of the good or the beautiful, the standards of our own community no longer seem inevitable: we see the naked human fact again, and no longer take the accidental garments of our life for the flesh of reality; in short, we look upon existence with that sense of release, that sense of fresh possibilities, which only literature can give us.

Now this ability to select the best that other civilizations and literatures have to offer is not achieved easily; it is not something that one can dig at in odd moments while waiting for a subway train or before returning to the office from luncheon; still less can it be acquired in tabloid courses on Comparative Literature. One must be able to escape, by one means or another, from the preoccupations of the crowd, to exist in such a way that selling advertising or shoestrings will no more enter into one's personality than Charles Lamb's routine in the East India office entered into his whimsy and caprice. Unless our writers are frankly different from the public for which they write, the literature they produce can hardly be anything but demoralizing.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

THE same kind of intelligence which discovered the coincidence that all great cities lie on rivers or fine harbours (the Jourdain of geography!) deplores the fact that most of the good writers on politics and economics are radicals. Only the other day a newspaper whose ill-fitting liberal garb fails to disguise its tory bones, commenting upon the passing of Mr. W. H. Mallock, said plaintively: "Conservatism would be fortunate if it could always have a few Mallocks to take the field against clever radical writers." In the sentence immediately preceding the one quoted, the writer admitted that Mr. Mallock "did not show himself a constructive thinker upon either social or economic questions, but he was able to explode fallacies with an unusual mixture of wit and logic."

Mr. Mallock is gone, and this is not the place to deal with his work, which expired long before its author died. We wish merely to call attention to the characteristic liberal and conservative attitude towards radical thinking. Somebody is wanted—not necessarily a "constructive thinker"—to "explode" fallacies. The intellectual poverty of anæmic liberalism puts it in the opposition: positive ideas belong to the radical. Radicals need not advertise for champions against "clever" conservative writers, because their very cause spells strength. Radicalism, we repeat once more, means nothing more than seeking the root: the connotation of violence for which stupid newspapers and the privileged interests which control them are responsible, may be ignored.

The FREEMAN is not on the defensive, it is dynamic, positive, radical; that accounts for its growth and for the enthusiasm of its supporters. It is not dogmatic, however, in its support of the policies it advocates. It aims always to be reasonable, if not sweetly reasonable, and its columns have ever been open to ideas and opinions not necessarily stencil copies of its editorials.

There are many good papers in America, but there is only one FREEMAN, and the perpetuation of this magazine by means of an increased subscription list should be the concern of every reader who recognizes a new thing under the sun.

A limited offer:

The FREEMAN has taken the trouble to buy a few second-hand copies of George Douglas's "The House with the Green Shutters" of which Mr. Muir wrote in these columns a fortnight ago, and it offers them to the earliest applicants. They are not for sale, but they may be had, free, with a new (not renewal) subscription to the FREEMAN for one year at \$6.00. Applications received after our supply of the book is used up will be returned unless the sender should instruct us to the contrary.

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